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THEORY AND ART OF MYSTICISM

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BY

RADHAKAMAL MUKERJEE, M.A., Ph.D.,

*Professor and Head of the Department of Economics and
Sociology, Lucknow University; Author of "Borderlands of
Economics", "Economic Sociology", "Introduction to Social
Psychology", Associate, International Institute of Sociology,
etc.*

With a Foreword by

WILLIAM ERNEST HOCKING,

*Professor of Philosophy, Harvard University,
Cambridge, U.S.A.*

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FOREWORD

Philosophy in the Orient has never been a detached speculation : it has been an adjunct of a way of life. The sage utters his Four-fold Truth ; but it is to merge at once into an Eight-fold Path. On the other hand, the Path debouches in a state of Salvation which is Enlightenment. It is not always possible to say whether the Enlightenment is the immediate condition of release into beatitude or is itself Salvation. In any case, practice culminates in a higher cognition. While the West sometimes prides itself upon the fact that its metaphysics and theology tend to express themselves in ethical codes and social efforts, these outflows of theory appear for the most part in the guise of corollaries or applications, whereas for the East the speculative truth is the immediate garb or framework for the religiously directed action. And the goal of that action is an experience in which the "good" of action and the "true" of thought are inseparably fused.

We are prone to describe this quest of an immediate experience of the Real as mysticism, and its achievement as mystical experience. Hence a significant book on mysticism, such as this book of Professor Radhakamal Mukerjee, drives straight to the centre of the spiritual sources of Asia ; and he has happily maintained throughout his work the characteristic oriental union of speculation and practice, of theory and art. He writes of a current of life whose essence he knows. Yet he adds to this primary and indispensable sympathy a threefold objectivity, that of the scholar scientifically trained, that of the reader widely familiar with western literature of his subject, and that of the sociologist concerned with the bearing of religion upon the health of human institutions.

It is of high importance for the rapidly changing East that a light so adequate should be thrown upon its ancient and perennial sources of strength. In the shock of social upheaval it is these sources that are likely to be discounted and jettisoned on the supposition that a modern society based on technology has no place for them, and on the kindred supposition that they have no interest nor function in such

a world. It is seldom that our students of society appreciate that principle of alternation in the hygiene of the mind whereby a mystical discipline remains an essential condition of the vigour and value of realistic enterprise, even of scientific fertility. Instinctively, the conservative impulses of Hindu piety, as seen in various plans of education, such as the Rishikula, the Gurakula, the schools of the Ramakrishna movement, and various others, have attempted to maintain a liaison between these elements. The instinct is sound; the new social streams will run shallow if they abandon the ancient springs, on the assumption that economy and its guides are competent to furnish all the vital equipment of a new order. But the validities of these spiritual arts need to be subjected to a deeper and more objective analysis, capable of severely critical separation between irrelevant and essential factors. It is in this direction that the present study renders a definite service to the actual situation not alone in India, but throughout the Orient.

And not alone in the Orient. For mysticism is one of the common elements in world religion; and a study which, like this one, joins hands with the work of western scholars, Rhys Davids, Poussin, James Woods, Rudolf Otto, J. D. Pratt, von Hugel, adds to the self-understanding of the race in its religious experience, and in so far to the moral unity of mankind. Mysticism has aspects which are local; it has other aspects which repel; it is capable of making common cause with our depravities and all manner of subjective concoits. Where it is largely cultivated there will be abundant danger of abuse somewhat in proportion to its promise of power, and there will be those who, with an honest zeal, desire to cleanse the temple by a radical excision. But it is not by impotence that we come to the things which are difficult and rare. We cannot forget that with the true mystic, wherever he is, the local disappears and we are at home in what is universal. And with him also, the body, the physical world, the social order, far from being abandoned, seem lifted into a new level of meaning—their normal meaning, presumably, which we habitually surrender and allow to become hidden. We must recur, unflinching, to the great enterprise of discerning the true mystic.

WILLIAM EMMETT HOCKESS.

PREFACE

THIS volume, in the first place, seeks to present an objective explanation of the mystical life and experience. Mysticism is the art of inner adjustment by which man apprehends the universe as a whole, instead of its particular parts. As such it is an experience which suggests a fulfilment of vital and mental processes; it is not the monopoly of gifted individuals, while its absence implies an impoverishment and even a warping of mind and personality.

Mystical apprehension is the outcome of a harmonious blend of all the sense experiences including the kinesthetic and organic, which latter melt the discrete items of experience into a running stream of psyche. Such fusion is, indeed, found in all intimations of wholeness, beauty, harmony, and holiness. As our knowledge of the external world in its diverseness and multiplicity is built out of the raw materials of the exteroceptive senses, so it is the kinesthetic and organic senses, which are the original elements in the apprehension of the world as a continuum, a unique and significant phase of our mental life.

The dialectic of the self moves on from the experience of continuum to that of an undivided Unity or of the world as unbounded Joy, as perpetual play of the Creative Spirit, or as manifestation of infinite charity or love, eternal sacrifice or righteousness. The mystic sometimes seeks to reach higher levels of experience by a simplification of the mental life through starvation, isolation, use of narcotic drugs, and other physical means of ecstasy, through hypnotic processes and through intense delights and cutting pains. More often such intimations are the outcome of deliberate control over bodily conditions and habits of thought and action, and of synthesis of diverse inner tensions and conflicts in ardent worship or by conscious imaginative processes. The integration and harmony of impulses, sentiments, and ideas that mysticism consciously or unconsciously

establishes is the basis not only of an intuitive perception of the unity and harmony of life in their fullness, but also of elevated joy and competence.

There are higher and lower stages of mysticism as there are higher and lower forms of religion or art. The physical objects, symbols, and attitudes associated with the various stages of mystical consciousness, show, accordingly, marked contrasts, which in this book form the subject-matter of objective analysis and interpretation from a definitely relativistic standpoint. The modes, objects, and experiences of mysticism in different historical religions and in different stages of ascent have been marshalled here for comparison and evaluation; and certain universal principles deduced, which apply to all forms of worship.

Secondly, there is much material in this volume for training in the art of contemplation; every person should cultivate this as the only effective safeguard against strains and tensions in inner life. Both novices and experts will find here stages in mental discipline and worship marked out as universal phases of man's contemplative experience. Yoga presents some practical methods of physical self-discipline and control of thought and meditation, culminating in *Samadhi* or ecstasy, which can be successfully adopted by any earnest seeker; here we find a systematic application of many of the principles and techniques found in modern psycho-therapy, as Jung has recently recognised in the following words: "Psycho-analysis itself and the lines of thought to which it gives rise are only a beginner's attempt compared to what is an immemorial art in the East."

A comparative study of mystical consciousness alone can help us to avoid the aberrations and emotional excesses of pseudo-mystics, on the one hand, and of hypnotists and spiritualists on the other, and to seek and obtain the true balance and meaningful poise, characteristic of the higher levels of true Yoga and religious experience. It also leads to a right appreciation of the great symbols, images, and concepts which different religions contribute to the sum total of man's religious consciousness, and of the uniqueness of the mystic's experience—experiences in all lands, that overstep the barriers of their race, environment and traditions, and have

significance in the universal search for knowledge, serenity, and goodness.

Thirdly, the volume presents the study of mysticism as the immediate intuition of social values, which represent the core of the social organism. Man's evolution in family and society builds up a harmonious system of social sentiments and relationships, which mysticism senses and moulds for its own aims. On the other hand, mysticism plays the leading part in organizing permanent sentiments and thus strengthens the varied loyalties in society and the vital modes of association.

Mysticism, impelled by such instinctive patterns as calm resignation, consecrated service, and the love of parents, of child, of friend, and man-woman love, or rather expressing herein the fundamental needs of the mystic's own nature, restores sanity and balance in emotional life. The goal of the types of ardent mysticism that cherish a personal God everywhere has been to establish such harmony and unity in inner life that both denial and enjoyment of things of sense become consecration, both pleasures and pains become offerings, and all deeds become sacrifices; the entire framework of life, with its bafflings and expressions, being fitted into God as the Whole and the All.

But theistic mysticism slowly though surely matures into a syncretic experience of all feelings and attitudes that stir the human breast; it becomes shorn of any concrete emotional manifestation, and passes into infinite joy and perfect quietude of mind, free from the restless oscillations of the psyche. The West seeks to establish a mental balance through a re-arrangement of the milieu, physical and social, and overestimates the importance of technology and organization in eliminating human stresses and sufferings. In the East the attempt is rather to operate on the mind itself irrespective of the environment. Science, technique, and economic and political organization have increased man's body to enormous dimensions, and established the dictatorship of things; both the body and mind of the individual maintain themselves only with the aid of things of the external world. Man feels lost when the material props of his nature are taken away and exhibits marked doubts, fears, and strains. In the present world, with its increased

human passions, its new conflicts and new pains, the wisdom of the East proclaims that in the mystic discipline and in the transformation of the psyche lies the surer road to avoiding the major sufferings and obtaining the major joys of life. This is no mere individual solace or salvation. For in the mystical apprehension of the reality there emerges out of the identification of consciousness and God a profound sense of unity binding together all men in one simultaneous and eternal all-love. An infinite charity, compassion, or love becomes the measure of identity consciousness or unity of self with Being; the participation in the being of others becomes nothing less than the secret of self-affirmation and self-transcendence involved in knowing oneself. In the Mahayana mysticism an infinite goodness appears as the expression of everlasting truth and competence of all things, from the grains of sand of the Ganges to the Buddhas, doomed to live for all creatures through the sons of time, unthanked and unperceived by them. The ideal of the divine perfection of the more important Hindu and Buddhist theistic mysticisms does not mean the possession of all possible values. God's love is regarded as morally perfect with respect to its content in the world, which, however, can be infinitely enriched aesthetically in the social process. A significant distinction between moral and aesthetic perfection is embodied in the doctrine of God's denial of fellowship with the finite creature as an episode in divine love, or God's endurance of all the evil and pain of the world. The social order here becomes the framework of illumination of the Jivanmukta and the Bodhisattva. The view of God becomes temporalistic and ethical, more in keeping with modern philosophical conceptions than the traditional view of the eternal perfection of the Creator. Mysticism becomes positive, not metaphysical; it implicates also a sociology.

Spiritual sight carries the mystic beyond the images and symbols of his own creed, religion, and personal history, which nourishes his inner nature at the beginning. In the higher reaches of mysticism, the ideas and sentiments melt into an ecstatic life, which recognizes no individuation. It is possible, therefore, to enjoy the mystic experience *per se*, the spiritual life without bounds. Could we not, with a deeper insight and more practical syncretism, mutually correct and enrich our

religious consciousness by adopting and re-creating the images and symbols of Hinduism, Buddhism, and Christianity, and seek synoptically the entire gamut of mystical experiences enshrined in the lives and devotions of Vajnavalkya and Plotinus, Buddha and Christ, Sankara and Eckhart, Sri Chaitanya and St. Francis, Chandidas and Al-Ghazzali?

The mystic is in fact as cosmopolitan as the man of science. Like him, again, the mystic is bent upon eliminating from the world miracle, chance, and capricious will. While the man of science extends his world by his defining senses and implements, the mystic does the same though discovering and revealing fresh concords and symmetries. The sense of vastness is common to science and mysticism; they are using to-day wider symbolism as they reach kindred levels of abstraction. But in the mystic's synoptic vision the vastness is freed even from the limitations of the subject-object reference of knowledge. The mystic tastes a new freedom and aloneness of an unbounded existence. Further, the man of science can express the unity of the idea; but the mystic translates it into the concrete unity of life; while the former sees relations and categories, the latter sees and lives in identity. Unlike the man of science the mystic's highest effort is an effortless turning inward—an effortlessness that comes through complete peace and freedom—by which he identifies himself with the wholeness of the universe, transcending time and life.

The mind is freed not only from all feelings, including religious or moral sentiments, but also from all notions and concepts with which meditation started in its course, but which now drop into their very insignificant, very human places. What remains is not even a thrilling rapture of unity, but a unique weight of wholeness or transcendence beyond the reach of any relativity or reference. Such clarity or insight arising out of concentration, without effort and delights and with neutrality of feeling, to use Buddha's simple words, results from a fusion of attitudes devoid of concrete contents. In the meditative art such a state formulates, as we shall explain later, neither illuminative notions nor, as a result, their elaboration into subjects and predicates, but conveys nevertheless the fullness of meaning.

The true knowledge passes into a mystical darkness of ignorance, yet shining in the naive clarity of the soul, unblemished by the haunted urges of life and remembrance. The final apprehension, reached not without some hesitation, is the apprehension of Silence. The highest, says Goethe, is ever silent. The Silence is identical with the Beyond, when one sees, hears, and apprehends nothing else: it is the eternal background, the ever-inscrutable. Psychologists tell us that thoughts and ideas lapse into attitudes and dispositions, into imageless states. Likewise in the progress of the mystic life, concrete images and feelings merge in the impalpable consciousness. In the most elevated *Samadhi* in Yoga words or verbal formulae lose themselves in the imponderable (*Sabda-atha-anavakidha*). Life seems to stand separate from the ultimate state of mind in the ordinary levels of experience. In the mystic plane the impalpable and the concrete become one. Out of these experiences and insights, whose value cannot be decided by psychology, emerge notions of a true metaphysical import. On the other hand, what are metaphysical notions and categories become for the mystic actual forms and levels of consciousness and being. Finally, the Absolute and Beyond in metaphysics is for the mystic also the supremely worthwhile reality in the cosmic-social process, commanding his service and adoration as the ultimate values of life in concrete situations. The absolutes of the mystic demand to be set in the total context of life, producing the familiar alteration and rhythm of his experience. These shape and guide the norms of his daily life and intercourse, and through him the world of social values and ideals, overcharged by his passionate faith, renovated by his periodical return to their springs in his own consciousness, and extended limitlessly by his dynamic vision.

The mystical attitude shows the widest possible plasticity. Differences in mystical intuitions arise out of differences in man's self-expression. Yet there is the unique and universal recognition that the concrete is the universal, and vice versa, and that our defining senses and discursive intellect are responsible for conceiving them separately. The mystic, by seeking the moments in the eternity and the eternity in the moments, the drop in the ocean and the ocean in the

drop—to quote from Gangaram, an illiterate Bengalee mystic quite innocent of theology and metaphysics—seeks nothing more and nothing less but to bridge for all time the gulf between logic and life, experience and knowledge.

Nevertheless the variety of mystical experiences is as comprehensive as their underlying unity is significant. Now the mystical attitude is theistic and devotional, actuated by the all-too-human feelings of resignation, obedience, companionship, parental devotion, and man-woman love; now it is impersonal and a cosmic and prefers the majesty and abstruseness of the self to love, hope, and joy. Now it is overpowered by charity or pity and the divine suffering, now by participation in the divine omnipotence. Now, again, it cherishes alternately the Void and the Full, now an absorption of the soul in a pantheistic exaltation in Nature. In the end it seeks the silence of the transcendent, beyond existence and beyond knowledge, eternally bemoaning the struggle of life. Now it identifies the Beyond with the over-soul, now discovers it as simply not Anything without any reference. But the mystical attitude again and again cherishes Goodness, Love, and Beauty in their utmost expansion.

The writer's firm conviction, in spite of the significant Russian social experiment, is that an adequate and enthusiastic ethical consciousness can flourish only among a people who are deeply interested in what is more than man and to whom mysticism opens out a more-than-human channel to the strivings after Goodness, Love, and Beauty. More than the biological and economic demands of social solidarity, man's reverence for God supplies the true and stable ground and intense zest for the ultimate values of Goodness and Love, rooted as these are in the divine nature. In a non-theistic mysticism, it is introspection establishing an inward continuity of self and the universe as a whole, including more than man, that generates the reverence for all men as seats of the ultimate values, and for all human and social experiences as channels of their expression. The other and self love themselves in each other; the neighbour is transformed into oneself, and the mystic asks, "Can there be bliss when all that lives must suffer? Shalt thou be saved and hear the whole world cry?"

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RADHANAMAL MUNSHI.

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON
VANDANA PUNJIA.
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INTRODUCTION

Much has been written of late years on the philosophy and psychology of religion. Primitive religion also has been for the last few decades the subject of detailed survey and examination. The recent advances of the child and abnormal psychology have contributed towards an adequate understanding of beliefs, cults, and observances in savage society. Moreover, recent trends in the mental hygiene movement and in the developments of psychology tend to concentrate upon the abnormal aspects of religion. Unfortunately, it is these very developments which have stood in the way of a right appreciation of the rôle of religion in mature mentality and culture, and of a more scientific analysis of religion as basic in the elements of folk sociology. Sociology, erected upon a distinctly positive and materialistic basis by Comte and Spencer, either has neglected religion altogether, or has found it a hindrance to social progress. The course of social evolution, on the other hand, shows that religion has been an indispensable instrument, which has aided man in the struggles of life; it has elicited attitudes and modes of behaviour which have enabled society to meet some urgent need or survive a crisis. Hence religion has proved itself to be a valuable tradition, a working philosophy of life. Religion in the highest sense, where it is not conventional or institutional, has kept alive in society a faith in certain ultimate values which has also guaranteed social development towards higher levels. But to-day this highest religion is labelled mysticism, which shares with magic, myth, and miracle a common derisive.

The conviction has gained ground that rayeticism, which is the soul of living religion, implies aberration rather than normal growth of personality. This is due mainly to a tendency often manifest among the psychologists to view religious experience from a wrong perspective. Thus, from Ribot to Freud and Leuba, what is for the most part religious aberration or mania has been examined, though not without

sympathy, and the result has been that religion itself is discredited or regarded as illusory. For who will emulate the irruptive visions of saints and seers with minds wearing out as the result of voluptuous imaginings? In all imaginative experiences there are higher and lower levels; and as we do not condemn all art or poetry simply because there are inferior examples, no more should we judge mysticism by its inferior or misguided phases only. The Psycho-Analytical school, which has detected phenomena of dissociation, repression, and sublimation in the lives of many mystics, is hardly justified in presenting these as universal mystical states; for there is a large mass of religious experience characterized, not by dissociation, conflict, repression, or mere play of the process of suggestion, but by the full participation of will or consciousness. This experience should be regarded as the norm and the standard from which to judge mysticism. In the mystical consciousness many degrees or types have to be admitted. The healthy well-poised Yogi, making his life intense and ordered by deep introspection, has little in common with the emotional instability of many mystics. Similarly the Buddhist or Christian missionary's equanimity and efficiency in welfare work afford an ample testimony to the stabilizing effect of mysticism. Thus the methods of avoiding the dangers of mere dissociation and of achieving a harmony between intuition and discrimination, even in all the higher modes of mysticism, now call for close study. Such materials, assembled in the later chapters from mystical consciousness in East and West, indicate not only an order and development in religious experiences in less advanced cultures, but also a definite sequence in elevated worship and contemplation generally. There is, in fact, a general agreement among the mystics of all religions, Eastern and Western, as to the character of the stages of experience and also with respect to the methods of inner discipline. Thus we are brought in touch with phenomena which can be regarded as objective.

Mysticism begins everywhere with crises and raptures as a part of experience of a personal God; but in all higher religions these are merely ephemeral. Mysticism gradually develops into a method of knowledge and action, which includes the whole of man's adjustment to the totality of

life and the world that he apprehends. Starting with the practice of self-hypnosis and removal of all sources of inner conflict, the mystic integrates all the forces of the mind into a unity and reconciles himself with the community and with the totality of experience as a spiritual system. According to *Gestalt* psychology, mind, its environment, and its processes are an integral dynamic whole. Such totality is, however, always full of disharmonies and tensions. The mystic, by his strenuous contemplation resolves them into a harmony and balance, a meaningful poem. In his ardent search for totality he stops at nothing short of transcending the self and the world. Then, if he finds the transcendent, he apprehends the totality with a triumphant affirmation of "I Am". The freedom of his mind from the ordinary restrictions of social existence is the avenue to unexpected revelations of community and harmony of self and the Universe. The Universe and the mind become a mysterious whole, full and entire, and mysticism ends as it begins with the sentiment of wonder or mystery which the togetherness of things, the whole or holy pattern of the actualities of the world, elicits. A study of such normal mystical experiences will show that the religious person, with his greater sanity and freedom, orders his life better and attains greater heights and powers of personality than the average non-religious person. So far as society is concerned the religious person is also a greater asset, inasmuch as, being a better judge of the true needs of human nature than the other, he discovers the source of social values. In the religious person, social values reincarnate themselves; in him the conflict of social ideals is completely resolved. He is he who leads society towards that full harmony and perfect concord which he obtains from his experience of God. Thus is far removed from the picture of the religious maniac abandoning himself in his isolation to the agitation and intonation of the psycho-analyst's "sublimated desires" and "repressed complexes".

Nor has the philosophy of religion always encouraged an adequate interpretation of the relation between religion and society. It has developed a metaphysical doctrine of mysticism which has found God, bleak in His purity, and orderliness, far remote from human wishes and wish-fulfillments. On the other hand, a positivist view, from Comte to

Stanley Hall, projects man's values and ideals to society and envisages an ideal system of human relations as the object of adoration. Here an essential element of the mystic consciousness, viz. the sense of finality and acceptance, is weak. The mystic's desire to rise above all relativities, which leads him, for instance, from immediate personal communion with God to the meditation of Pure Being, is baffled in a bare social conception of religion. Neither communion with a personal God nor contemplation of an ideal social order, where the mind is confined to the mere human or gregarious level, can give lasting or perfect satisfaction. On the other hand, a mind hypnotically absorbed in a vast emptiness, and denying all human relationships as unreal or evil, is a mind out of gear. In the highest phases of mystical consciousness the intellect, the senses, and the heart must be profoundly stilled. The intellect reaches its highest goal by meditation upon and absorption in the Supreme Being, pure and absolute, where there is no human or self-reference. This is the sublimest height which the mystic can reach and to ordinary persons it is unapproachable. The senses and the heart reach their own supreme goal when man can live and commune with the Supreme Being in its very intimate, very human patterns.

The types of mystical intuition and experience may be broadly marked out as follows: (1) There is a fervent mysticism, saturated with intense emotional satisfaction in which God appears in a concrete human pattern, and the mystic in his state of rapture can hardly distinguish between the apprehension of his unity with God and sensual and even sexually determined delight. Deep and delicate affections here blossom forth into spiritual love of which the species and types are as different as the various human relationships and the moods and temperaments of individuals. The schools of Hindu Bhakti, Persian Sufi, Chinese and Japanese Tendai and Avatamsaku, and Christian mysticism, illustrate the wide emotional variations and antitheses of religion. (2) A variant of emotional mysticism is an ecstatic (Nature) mysticism characterised by a sense of the whole and disappearance of the sense of separateness, accompanied by deep emotional satisfaction. Such ecstasy is, however, far different from the changeful and excited states of feeling elicited by the personal,

modified God of worship. The personal deity is here superseded by the All-Being into which the soul expands by breaking down all relativities. The finite is lost in the infinite, and nothing remains but an illumination and cosmic feeling. Religious introspection is, however, weak and the relation between the finite and the infinite, the parts and the whole, is not brought into intimate touch with the development of the inner self or soul. (3) There is a cool unimpassioned mysticism in which the mystic through his intuition apprehends Reality as absolute and modelless, as the substance and matrix of the world, life and mind, as the over-soul, a mystical superlative of God, in which the contrast between the knowing subject and the known object is ultimately lost. The intimate, personal God of emotional mysticism recedes here also, and instead the Atman, Brahman, Bhuta-tathata, Atya Vyana, Tao, or Sunyata is cherished by the self, finding its rest and freedom by mingling with it and interpenetrating it. The proud utterances: "I am the Brahman," "I am the heart of Wisdom," "I am Allah," or "I am that I am" alike reveal the exalted feeling of self-assertion animated with the majestic march of the soul to perfection, "God" being experienced in this march itself, the divine existence being no other than pure, supra-logical consciousness. (4) There is a fourth type of mysticism in which the quest of the soul and the quest of the Being, the way of knowledge and the way of love, are combined, and even in the attainment of complete self-knowledge the profound mystery, majesty, and grace of the Being are not missed. Upanisadic, Vedantic, and Mahayana mysticism illustrate this.

Mysticism, as Otto observes, is by its nature "polar", and is not inconsistent.¹ Thus the mystic may alternately envisage God as the Deity beyond all modes, the Wholly Other, transcending the contrast between the conditioned and unconditioned, or as interchangeably present as the all-absorbing All or Over-soul or, again, as the sweet lover and friend of the finite self. How often is the mystical intuition grafted upon theism in the East and then the Wholly Other, beyond Being and Not Being, is called God, and mystical and personal attitudes slip into one another? The same intuition of a fully mystical unity, characteristic of the most

¹ Otto, *Idem of the Holy*, also *Mysticism of the East*.

elevated stages of meditation, underlies the faith in personal divinity in a lower stage of experience. Thus the vision of identity or its various grades or stages alternate with determined acts of worship and personal communion, equal in value for the mystic to the identity consciousness.

It is in the alternating journeys of the soul that the mystic experiences the sense of awe and creatureliness, as well as the most exalted feeling and powerful exercise of the will, and abolishes the contrast between mystical quietism and an abundant life of love and service. For the true mystic the relationship of the one to the many is one of the most live polarity, and thus the most profound quiet and the most strenuous life can interpenetrate each other. It is thus that mystical intuitions differ between man and man according to his religious traditions, moods, and stages of elevated meditation. Yet, though the intellect and the senses and the heart may apprehend the Reality in different ways and in different degrees of intensity, from which may result contrasted dogmas or philosophies, such as those of *Karolayam*, *Nirvana*, transcendence, immanence, or incarnation, the Reality itself is above the flux of temperaments, stages, and states of consciousness, above all contrasts and contradictions. The paradoxes, indeed, illustrate the limitation of human experience; and thus the theory of Reality given by mysticism of different religions is couched often in paradoxical and self-contradictory terms.

In whatever manner the reality is experienced by different types of mysticism, each kind of mysticism furnishes the ground of a distinct type of ethic. Emotional mysticism derives its zest and co-ordination from the various loyalties in domestic and social life, and ultimately recoils upon and transfigures the mystic's own obligations towards society and his environment. Similarly the mystical identification of self with soul, Brahman, or Pure Being also engenders characteristic ethical attitudes. Where the emphasis is merely upon a modelless Godhead as Alone and completely transcendent, there may be tendency to regard the world as wholly evil and as an error or illusion with corresponding neglect of the social order and obligations. On the other hand, where the consciousness of transcendence is accompanied by a consciousness of the vital immanence of the One there

is a dynamic interpretation of logos and action, intellectual mysticism and moral ideal.

Mysticism is not merely a way of understanding, it is also a way of life. For even in the most elevated mysticism the herald of knowledge experiences a unity of feeling, a calm and pure love, joy, and blessedness based on unity of being; he apprehends that unity not merely in the depth of his understanding, but also in his relations to his fellow-creatures as the surpassing *omnium bonum et beautiful*. It is thus not in world-flight but in the active participation of the divine love, will, or righteousness that the philosophical mystic's identity with Being bears fruit. For the mystic God shines through all fellow men and all have become God. The Bhagavad Gita thus recommends the ethic of strong and manly action through a unifying of the will with the divine purpose, nay, through the identification of the individual in his fellow-creatures and of all fellow-creatures in the individual. Says also the Sutta Nipata: "As I am, so are these. As these are, so am I. Thus identifying himself with others, the wise man neither kills nor causes to be killed." The mystic vision of the one in the many and of the many in the one accordingly supplies the deep and broad foundations of ethics.

Mysticism posits eternal values such as Truth, Beauty, and Goodness, which are all infinite, and which transcend any system of human relations, but it finds these actualised in concrete human situations and experiences. To realise these ultimate values it often borrows its symbols and imagaries from the intimacies of human love and aspiration; but in return it recompenses society a hundredfold by raising the latter to the highest value-plane. Religion, which nourishes itself on the heart's desires, throws open a new and superhuman channel wherein he true safety and profound peace. It is from here that it imparts a compelling vision of truth or goodness and ideal of human destiny. Law, public opinion, or religious convention may be thrown to the winds in the mystic's critical judgment of institutions, based as it is on a true perception of final as opposed to instrumental values. The mystic has proved indispensable in history because he subjects not only all categories of social experience, but also all assumed postulates and conceptual standards, to constant

scrutiny in the illumination of absolute or eternal values. His capacity for guidance is born of a sense of the whole, a freedom from inertia and prejudice, an inner certainty and a simplicity of will, invaluable qualifications for chalking out social policies and programmes. Thus it is those whose vision extends beyond the bounds of the social order to limitless vistas of value and experience who sustain and renew society, give it an unerring lead, and endow it with an unswerving faith.

The relation between mysticism and social values is, therefore, a vital subject of social thinking, especially in an age where the process of evaluation is still chaotic. Most of the social sciences are suffering from the confusion of standards of valuation; chiefly because sociology has not been able as yet to establish a unity of the concept of value, rendering impossible in thought the abstraction of economic, ethical, or religious fields or any special field of social activity. When the consciousness of the social sciences is fully impregnated with the consciousness of the highest values, the differences between the mechanical and the ideal, between the evolutionary and the spiritual, may be composed. No adequate and comprehensive theory of social progress, which it is the task of social philosophy to envisage, can afford to neglect the considerations of religion; and sociology, which regards all phenomena of human society as its province, should no longer relegate to the philosophy of religion alone the task of attempting a comprehensive formulation of the goal of man's collective effort and aspiration.

CHAPTER II

FORMS AND FUNCTIONS OF MYSTICISM

VIEWS OF SOCIOLOGISTS ON RELIGION.—A very important though neglected aspect of sociology is the rôle of religion. Religion sums up some of the profoundest feelings and experiences of man, and has played a dominant part in his social development. Sociologists, however, have generally left the examination of the function of religion to anthropologists and theologians. The anthropologists, following Durkheim and his French collaborators, have examined primitive religion and based it on social considerations. They have found in society the source of religious beliefs and feelings. Lévy-Bruhl, on the other hand, has resolved religious ideas into collective representations which he says belong to a pre-logical type of mentality characteristic of primitive peoples. According to him, the law of participation reigns in the primitive mind, and religious ideas are characteristic of distinctively inferior phases of mental development. With the emergence of social psychology we have ceased to draw a hard and fast distinction between the mentality of peoples of lower and higher culture. Thus, animism—which, since Tylor's epoch-making treatment of the subject, has been regarded as the distinctive trait of primitive minds—sheds its mystery when animal and child psychology shows that animism is not the exception but the rule in the animal's or the child's behaviour.

Again, though religious feelings and ideas are from the beginning intimately bound up with social evolution and come to exercise their sway over the more important phases of social activity, religion cannot be explained merely as a social phenomenon. The history of religions shows an exuberant variety of errors and cults, as well as of individual moods and attitudes. Accordingly the individual element is an indispensable part of every religion: mysticism, which is essentially the reaction of the individual, vitalizes what has been a social product and tradition; without it, religion

fails to be a constructive factor. Consequently, to say that religion is the most effective means of social control is an understatement; religion is, furthermore, and above all, the supreme expression of individual freedom and self-experience. A host of thinkers, beginning with Comte and Mill, and especially including the exponents of social Christianity, have emphasized the social implications of religion. Scientific religionists now find in an idealized Humanity the source of religious inspiration free from the aberrations of human infirmity and dependence. But to say that Society, conceived as an infinite process of manifestation of the human spirit, is the profoundest concept of totality is doing injustice to human aspirations; religion introduces man to something which is above and beyond human society, which is continuous with it and comprehends it.

The rôle of religion is underestimated further by a group of thinkers of the Psycho-Analytic school, who regard religion as a purely subjective thing, an outcome of an infantile projection of consciousness, surviving simply because it meets certain elementary tendencies of human nature. Such an analysis, which has been sometimes carried to extremes, is defective because it derives its materials mostly, if not solely, from morbid and pathological cases. Thus a theory of religion, derived from abnormal experiences, or emphasizing certain pathological tendencies which may be present in the apparently normal mind, is hardly scientific.

NORMALITY OF RELIGION.—Both the religious experiences in early societies, and the mystical experiences in the higher religions, afford evidence that religion belongs to man's normal relations to the universe. Mysticism accordingly is not an abnormal phenomenon, nor an outcome of reflexes and baffled desires, but rather an expression of normal human impulses. The distinctive feature of religious experience is that man creates an ideal world which, through the resolution of all conflicts or stresses of his inner urges, engenders a certain permanent attitude towards the physical and social environment. Such a permanent attitude comes of a more or less complete integration of his impulses, and this makes his adjustment to nature and to society easier, more stable, and more effective than before. Man's worship is characterized by more or less blending of his impulses and

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desires; hence worship is a mechanism of adaptation which plays a distinct rôle in man's mental development. A deficiency in mystical endowment thus implies deficiency in the capacity for adjustment.

RELIGION EVOLVES WITH MAN.—In primitive culture, when man's knowledge and control of the environment were inadequate, fear and suspense, anger and supplication, wove his mental patterns, and cults, rites, and spells prescribed certain valuable attitudes and modes of behaviour which enabled him to overcome a perilous situation or pass over an instinctive conflict. Each stage of economic development thus nurtures its characteristic religious emotions towards Nature. Again, as society becomes more complex, there is an evolution of man's groups and values, and the emotions and sentiments centred round groups and institutions are organized into an harmonious pattern; social religion, which plays the leading rôle in organizing permanent social attitudes, makes social ties enduring, and ensures institutional standardization. Man's religious attitudes and social standards accordingly differ in different environments—differences which account mainly for differences in the idea of and feeling towards God. There are also individual peculiarities. A man's psychophysical condition or constitution is a governing factor in his religious consciousness. But, human nature being everywhere the same, there is also a similarity of religious feelings and attitudes among different peoples rooted in the original nature of man. Indeed, in the higher mystical consciousness, with an increasing inwardness, a greater concentration towards the idea of feeling, both the context of religious tradition and the uniqueness of personal history tend to disappear, and there emerge universal attitudes and standpoints. A comparative study of religion reveals the fundamental religious unity of man.

In primitive religion, amidst the constant scene-shifting of the environment to which he could not adjust himself, man found a basis of adjustment in his objects of worship. When he resorted to these no natural phenomena would disturb him, no social pressure would yield inner dissatisfaction. As his economic needs differ in the hunting, pastoral, and agricultural stages, the worship of nature-agencies shows a corresponding change. Similarly, the evolution of the horde,

tribe, or village community is accompanied by a change in the ideas of divinity. Ardently and in diverse ways man seeks communion with his different objects of worship, and these come to be arranged in a hierarchy according to the gradation of social needs and aspirations.

METHODS OF MYSTICAL EXPERIENCE.—DISSOCIATION PHENOMENA.—Methods of communion also vary, from the use of certain drugs and other physical means of ecstasy, to concentration on bright objects or on symbols, formulae, or ceremonies, auto- or hetero-hypnosis, all of which contribute to an impression of the invisible presence of God, to inner peace and harmony and sometimes to both intellectual and moral energy. Recent neurological studies of hypnotism, hysteria, and epilepsy have thrown light on the motor and sensory automatism, which are found associated with certain phases of mystical experience. Thus the phenomena of dissociation and emotional upheaval, with the resultant control of the body by agencies which the individual neither understands nor controls, are met with in the clinic as well as in the cloister. Abnormal psychology has still its conquests to make in the field of the dissociation of personality; and with these will come a true understanding of the more dramatic aspects of religious experience. No doubt there are important uses of hypnotic dissociation, which the great religions have more or less adequately appreciated. For example, to a novice in contemplative life some degree of dissociation is useful for weaning himself from the habits of thought and action of his physical life, which are a handicap to his elevated thought-process. It also appears that when the sympathetic nervous system is removed from conscious cerebral control, and is directly stimulated by suggestion, or by what Coué and Baudouin call "auto-suggestion", a great increase in the energy of that system takes place. Baudouin describes how this increased energy may be made useful in medical treatment; two and other apparently incurable acquired reactions can be inhibited; warts can be cured; stigmata can be produced; and perhaps tuberculosis and certain other germ diseases, in their early stages, can be checked. Evidence is also available that subjective audition, which is a form of slight dissociation, though it is similar to the illusions produced by serious brain disease, has often

occurred in the case of some persons of strong imagination, and does not seem to be inconsistent with effective or living thought. Thus "voices", "visions", or even "touches" may represent an unusually vivid form of intuition and illumination.¹ There are two hypnotic states which may be distinguished. One is a transitory state which is accompanied by an enormous extension of simple memory and strong belief. In deep hypnosis we have both sound judgment and extensive memory. The normal waking state is imperfect in memory owing to obstacles the character of which is at present unknown, but in judgment is considerably more advanced, though still short of perfection. Kohnstamm thinks that in the deepest state of hypnosis the soul not only knows everything that has ever been experienced in the ego-form, but also never falls into error. According to him the soul is perfect in this state, even with regard to morals.²

HYPNOTIC PROCESSES IN REASON.—More investigation is called for in this field. On the whole, it appears that hypnotic methods exercise important and beneficial effects on the function of the lower nervous system and that a slight degree of disorganization may assist some of the higher thought-processes. Much would depend also upon the conditions which initiate the processes of suggestion or auto-suggestion. All hallucinations, positive or negative, show the effect of self-hypnotism in a wrong way. If the particular determining tendencies implanted be right, "deep" hypnosis may lead to an unexpected expansion of the faculties of the mind, or to the acquisition of supernormal powers. What role the brain plays here is not understood. Hypnotism and similar expedients have no doubt been utilized in the East for delicate and complex spiritual exercises, which seem to indicate that the increase of energy arising from auto-suggestion has been more valuable as regards the treatment of the mind than that of the body. In many forms of Eastern meditation the ritual movements with the fingers which touch different organs of the body, as well as local concentration on suitable nerve-centres visualized as lotuses or great centres of light of various colours, can promote a perfection of bodily conditions, and bestow on the mystic control over the law-

¹ See Graham Wallis, *The Art of Thought*

² Dorsch, *The Crown in Psychology*

conscious nervous habits, so that the stage of the most elevated contemplation may be reached. In advanced types of religious experience hypnotic trance or dream-condition is rare, and a harmony is secured between an intense activity of the entire nervous system, higher and lower alike, and the conscious will. The earlier and more direct expedients which induce self-hypnosis, suggestion and feeling, unmediated by thought, are abjured. We have less of normally semi-conscious states, such as intuition and illumination, and more of discrimination and reflection, aided by a prescribed train of images or subjects of meditation. Indeed, the more elevated the meditation the more conscious and organised is the effort towards control and direction of emotion, will, and imagination. On the higher levels, accordingly, the states of religious ecstasy, fever, or intoxication, which share with hysteria and epilepsy and other pathological states situate between these, in the tendency to manifest dissociation, are shunned; and we have, on the other hand, a more or less complete synthesis of man's diverse passions, stresses, and conflicts which arise from the depths of his unconscious.

SAFEGUARDS AGAINST DISSOCIATION. STABILITY OF RELIGION.—As a general rule the dangers of mere dissociation produced by the direct and simple methods of self-hypnotism are sought to be avoided in all elevated religious contemplation by directing the train of emotions as well as the train of images and ideas along a given path. The religious images are prescribed for man, fashioned out of the raw material of his feeling and will by his social and religious tradition and philosophy. Belief in God; love manifested towards the father, the mother, or the friend; sexual desire or æsthetic emotion; the craving for an ideal human relationship: all these, which are rooted in the whole man, interact with one another and constitute a harmonious reality which imposes itself upon the mind by reason of its order and stability. Such images or ideal objects do not follow in haphazard succession as do the creations of a man's day-dreams and reveries. The images here are woven together into a complex pattern and system, organized into permanent attitudes and standpoints which the individual deliberately cultivates. It is thus that the contemplation of such images and experiences on the ideal plane becomes for him the source of competence and

equipoise. The difference between the aesthetic and the religious attitude consists in this, that the latter represents a greater systematisation and ordering of the impulses which are more in accord with general development of the mind, and hence engenders a much stronger feeling of acceptance. A poem or work of art may resolve the confusion of opposed and discordant impulses and thus prove a valuable guide to responses. But the guidance that religion gives is surer and more effective, and its sanction and authority greater, simply because the religious experience is built up out of fewer inhibitions and exclusions, and out of more integrations and syntheses. The religious person thus finds himself ready for all possible situations; the mystic's responses are far more subtle and plastic than those of the poet and the artist, who are, moreover, tied down by the so-called formal elements in art. The poet's or the artist's images, expressive of his *dauras*, are pale and empty appearances, as compared with the mystic's visions, which make a much profounder impression upon the sense organs and are far richer in significance. The beauty and grandeur of the mystic's vision far eclipses any that may characterize the products of normal creative imagination. The mystic's visions pass like "flashes of lightning" or resemble "the radiance of a million suns and the coolness of a million moons". For many mystics again the divine presence is felt near and realized even more vividly than if it were actually apprehended by the senses.

CONSCIOUSNESS OF THE DIVINE PRESENCE.—The explanation of such unique experiences is that the mystic, while ■ meditates on a Personal God, is deeply coloured by emotions and his body shows a particular motor adaptation. As his concentration becomes deeper he loses sight of the object of his meditation and oversteps space and time, and there now lingers not an awareness of concrete images or feelings, but an awareness of their meaning. The mind, then, merely preserves a tension which had been felt at the outset, and this tension, with its more or less specific motor reactions and kinesthetic emotions, produces the sense of the divine presence. It is the incipient motor strain and adjustment which are the test of the divine presence. Thus the Quran observes: "And when My servants ask thee concerning Me, then I am nigh unto them and answer the cry of him that crieth unto Me."

acuteness, and specificity, the feeling of individuality, diminishes; and there emerges a cosmic apprehension which clothes in shining, immutable garb the mystic's ontological or philosophical tradition; or, again, the perfect intuition becomes itself the starting point of metaphysics or ontology.

THE MYSTIC AND HIS WORLD.—As religion touches on attainment the notions and values often alter. Sometimes the man vanishes and there is left his mind alone, refined down to a state of indifference and lackluster. Sometimes the man enlarges and expands himself and realises the universe in him and himself in the universe. Sometimes both man and the universe disappear in the restoration of the void. Or, again, both man and mind vanish, and there only exists God in his singular will or thought. Whether man is saved or annihilated, liberated or dissolved, the understanding realises its highest aim, when existence becomes indifferent and impervious to it. Sometimes, again, the senses and the heart obtain their highest desires. All desires then become offerings, concrete experiences become the seat of eternal values, and both man and God exist in eternity, pursuing each other in infinite love or sport, sorrow or sacrifice. Such notions and values, indeed, differ widely according to religious tradition or individual mood; and they have far different effects on the relations of the worshipper to his fellow-man, and through him on philosophy, on social and ethical ideals. These are living, vivid realities only to those whose life is one deliberate worshipful experimentation—the great mystics and saints in different religions who envisage the highest truth and the highest value in any given human situation. They live in a world that, in spite of fellow man and even in spite of themselves, is just, good, and beautiful. It is for their sake that we hold our faith in man, for they face all darkness with hope and courage. They derive their power from a Reality which is higher than ourselves, and yet which works with and through us, from a vast and comprehensive spiritual world which sets along with ours, but in comparison with which ours is poor and unworld, full of conflicts and neuroses.

PSYCHOTHERAPY AND RELIGIOUS DEPRIVATION.—No doubt the institutional standardisation characteristic of the present epoch, the strain of adaptation of the mind, as well as the

decline of religion, are responsible for the universality of neuroses. Such neuroses are, so to speak, temporary gaps in the organisation of mind, and are inevitable accompaniments in the evolution of consciousness. As Janet says: "Neuroses are disturbances of the various functions of the organism, disturbances characterized by an arrest of development without deterioration of function." The modern study of neuroses has been accompanied by the advocacy of various psychotherapeutic methods which have close affinity with forms of religious discipline practised through the ages. Auto- or hetero-hypnosis, rational persuasion, psycho-analysis or auto-suggestion all have been successfully tried during the last two decades for the relief or cure of neurotic conditions. It is now being realised that no single method, but a joint use of the several methods, bears the seeds of success and will become the general rule in the near future. Moreover, though no direct use is made of religious faith by the psychotherapists, not a few recognise its potency in focusing suggestion towards the end in view. Suggestion, that it may be effective, must be backed by some form of belief or faith and must involve an exercise of will, hence becoming much more than a merely mechanical, automatic process. Thus the ancient, as well as modern, religious methods and practices are now seen in a new light. The persistent repetition of formulae; turning of the beads; listening to the sounds of the waves of the sea or the murmur of the waterfall; fixation of the gaze; rhythmical movements of the dance, or the maintenance of a peculiar bodily attitude and regulation of breath common to various religions—all these represent methods similar to those employed by scientific hypnotism. Similarly, the constant thought that the bodily and the cosmic system, or the self and the divinity, are identical, and the whole host of suggestive formulae and rituals which reinforce the realization of these ideas show the efficacy of suggestion and auto-suggestion recognized in Hindu or Muhammedan worship. Or, again, in the religions of the impulses we find the psycho-analyst's recognition that emotion is a valuable aid to suggestion and that a re-education of the impulses is an essential part of mental adjustment. Psycho-analysis has shown that the process of sublimation should, as far as possible, avoid mere reaction formation, which would lead

to great dissipation of energy. Accordingly, a religious mysticism, which revels merely in the variegated moods and raptures of love, and shrinks from the harder tests of service and suffering, is admirably pathological. When crude and fleshly love is purified and transformed at forges, on the other hand, new and indestructible links, which bind man with the rest of creation in sweet peace and concord. The sublimated affections fulfil themselves not in sentimental self-indulgence but in an apprehension of the unity of Life, which is also the true goal of Reason. It appears that the subconscious consists of various strata and that the most superficial of these are peculiar to each individual, whereas the deeper strata are cosmical. In religious meditation which goes deeper into the innermost strata man finds his emotions, will, and intellect are at one with the rest of the Universe. The phenomena of dissociation and co- or sub-consciousness indicate that there are many egos belonging to one soul, one of which knows about the conscious contents of the others in the form, "as if they were alien subjects." Many of the mystical experiences and psychical phenomena may be said to rest on a primordial relation between mind as a whole, and mind as a whole on the foundation of a supermind, and not merely upon a relation between ego and ego. Both in mysticism as well as psychical phenomena, the unconscious mind as a whole, or a sub-conscious part of it, is more important than the ego-part of the mind. For some mystics and gifted persons the omniscience of the supermind becomes conscious in the ego-form, and we may accordingly explain clairvoyance, premonition, etc. May it be that the supermind is omniscient but its ego-side is subject to the fluctuations of the material body? The material conditions thus dictate the forms of manifestation of the one supra-personal soul-entelechy which is at the very bottom of all life, the supreme quest of the true mystic.¹ Such are some of the outstanding conclusions and hypotheses which may be derived in the religious field from the rather contradictory strands of thought associated with modern psychopathology and therapy.

JOYOUSNESS OF RELIGION.—One thing, however, is clear, and that is that religious contemplation induces a feeling of joy that permeates all understanding, that can hardly

¹ Hans Dethlefs, *The Psychology of Mysticism*.

be put into words. The mystic suffers from an inner conflict, and hence there is a tremendous outflow of the vital energy. In his case the blending or organisation of impulses removes doubt and fear and the vital energy flows in abundant measure. There are no opposed or conflicting ideas and emotions, but balance and proportion are established, and inhibitions are overcome in an impressive calm and equipoise broken only, if at all, by highly controlled movements directed towards a well-defined goal.

PHYSIOLOGICAL AND SENSORY AIDS TO RELIGIOUS RESPONSE.—Together with the organisation of the instinctive urges and the withdrawal of energy from the alternative channels we have some unverbaised, and visceral and kinæsthetic experiences. With the *Gestalt* theory in view, we might state that the integrated impulses are in themselves a form of structure at what Kohler would call the psychophysiological level. It appears that these experiences are dependent for the most part on the responses of unstriated muscles and glands—the muscles of the arterial walls (hence blood pressure) being of special importance. Sensations from striated muscles play a fairly important part as well. In fact, the sympathetic nervous system, the viscera and the smooth muscle tissues are all involved in the religious response. Thus, among the physical characteristics of the mystic which indicate a response of smooth muscular tissue are thrills up the spine, sudden shivers and vibrations of the entire body, tingling of the skin, a glow of warmth and profuse perspiration, a fit of coldness, deep breathing, slow pulse, etc. It is well known that direct or indirect participation in rhythmical dance or bodily movement produces such experiences. Now these components appear to play a dominant part in a great variety of attitudes towards life-giving objects and towards adjustments that promise fulfilment of life, the motivations of which organise themselves into such emotions as those of faith, harmony, joy, safety, and peace.¹ If this be so, mystic experiences can hardly be regarded as morbid or abnormal. The religious mystic experiences some unusual organic responses which accompany an alteration in the rhythm of his body. His fluctuations are

¹ Starbuck, "The Instinctive Sources as Sources of Wisdom," *Journal of Religion*, vol. 2, No. 2.

less marked and the tension of the organs also ceases, producing a greater harmony of the physical functions. Even the external stimuli themselves cease now. Some organic change occurs, the mystic feels differently, and the stimuli are presented in a different pattern. Sudden changes in peripheral responses, the stimuli remaining constant, have commonly been found in laboratory tests.¹ Most of the mystical experiences induced either by meditation or by bodily exercises represent profound changes in sensitivity. Hence to awaken religious feelings appeals are often made to kinæsthetic and organic scenes in various ways. The lessons of Hindu meditation include such physical exercises as would lead to deep breathing and movements in the chest, diaphragm, and abdomen, which induce a variety of intimate organic experiences. Flowers, scents, and incenses are used in most religions as incentives to worship. A deliberate cultivation of control and discrimination of smell or hearing is met with in certain religious sects. The sense of touch is also appealed to in rituals which are widespread, such as sitting on silk, skin, etc., touching the different organs of the body, food, water, earth, fire, or flowers, making movements with hands and fingers, grasping a staff, a metallic utensil, or implement of worship, etc. Similarly, the sacrificial food offering is found in almost all religions and in primitive society, the common participation in the sacrificial feast and drink amidst choral music and dance being calculated to stimulate the organic senses more strongly. Music, song, recitation of hymns, words, or formulas, peculiar dancing or rhythmical bodily movement, circumambulation, pilgrimage, and procession are to be found in many advanced religions serving as kinæsthetic stimuli to the religious emotions. The inhibition and control of respiration, gesticulation, and peculiar bodily posture met with in many spiritual exercises similarly effect a change in the kinæsthetic and visceral feelings. A sudden and violent change in these feelings for the artificial working up of ecstasy is brought about in the spiritual concerts of some religious sects of Islam and Hinduism. These seek the aid of recitation, modulated in cadence of mystico-lyrical hymns and accompanied by the play of instruments, of

¹ Gardner Murphy, "A note on Method in the Psychology of Religion," *The Journal of Philosophy*, vol. xxv, No. 12, 12th June, 1928.

peculiar inclination of the body and exercises of the limbs, and even of stimulants and narcotics. On the other hand, gradual fasting, till the limit of complete abstinence from food or drink is reached, is enjoined by more than one religious sect. In all these we find that the modification or excitation of the kinesthetic and organic senses plays an important part in eliciting the religious response. In the higher types of mysticism, we also find that the symbols of meditation elicit intense emotions which ultimately result in deep-seated pain and a voluptuous flow of tears. Symbols and images of desertion and separation are most commonly met with in religious literature, and God is said to wipe tears from the eyes of the mystic or quench his consuming thirst with nectar. Among many religious sects the infliction of severe pain on the body through the use, among other means, of red-hot irons and beds of thorns or nails, prolonged exposure to the noon-day sun, surrounding oneself by fire on all sides, or immersion in water, are not uncommonly met with. All these play on the sensory nerves, whether cutaneous or internal. The visceral and kinesthetic experiences thereby induced or made habitual indicate not merely adjustments within the body, but also deeper adaptations that find expression in the religious and æsthetic emotions of hope and competence, joy and harmony. Such experiences represent the apprehension of the Whole or the Holy, the *Numerus*. Otto makes the numinous element which elicits wonder, awe, or abasement the distinctive characteristic of the religious consciousness. The sense of mystery and harmony which overwhelms the mind as it comes into contact with wholeness is the essential and ubiquitous element of religious feeling. It is with the intimate organic senses that man with his body responds to the universe as a whole instead of to its particular parts, which he gets to know by the defining senses. "The universe, as it were, takes us all of a heap," Alexander suggests, "and we respond in this vague sense of mystery." In the ordinary consciousness man takes reality piecemeal, selecting successively isolated sets of stimuli for response. A kinesthetic and organic change or exhilaration hints or suggests a fresh fulfilment in the vital and mental processes which transcend the relations of space and time, and the meaning of which cannot be described in words. Herein lies the significance of

symbolism in art and religion, which seeks to express such subtle and undefinable adjustments in the deeper levels of consciousness. While the defining senses are correlated with objects distinguishable in space and time, the intimate organic senses, on the other hand, provide a sense of vague and confused, though intense, experience. It is the vague feelings of wholeness, which, indeed, characterize artistic and mystical feeling. A changed visceral sensitivity often brought about, as mystical experience suggests, by an appropriate bodily posture and regulation of breathing, becomes the basis and the source of many of the deepest insights which man has had into the universe and which he expresses in a rich and variegated imagery and symbolism. "The mystic state brings us into contact with the total passage of reality in which all the diverse stimuli merge into one another and form a single unanalyzable unity in which the ordinary distinction of subject and object does not exist."¹ Education, religious tradition, and mystical contemplation, as well as new organic experiences, work upon the raw material of the individual's personal history and childish affective life, and the result is an ineffable experience of the Reality, which has as yet eluded the attack of experimental psychology. That the mystical experiences are rooted in certain organic conditions does not, however, discredit their value as a revelation of truth. The limitation of the psychological treatment of religion arises from the fact that the organic senses which play the major rôle in man's estimates of adoration and worship do not define objects, or dispose them into spatial or temporal orders, or relate them in any way schematically. Man's adjustments towards God, the Eternal or the Absolute, are little capable of definition in spatio-temporal terms; therefore mystical experience involves a demand for a type of metaphysical justification which is based essentially on unique personal experience.

NATURALNESS OF RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE.—While dogmatism is the chief obstacle to understanding other religions than one's own, another great hindrance arises out of man's incapacity to seek and rely upon intuitions, to cultivate normally the higher planes of consciousness which

¹ *Ibid.*, *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, p. 18.

mirror the spiritual ultimates. Science has perceived but dimly the reality of the intuitional world of the mystic. As it understands more of this world and its relations to phases of mental life, fully conscious as well as subconscious, the visions of mystics and saints will be regarded not as aberrations, but as the exercise of the best part of human nature and, indeed, the most natural thing in the world. Science and religion will then divide between them different sets of phenomena, and perhaps use much the same kind of symbolism, since they both rise to abstractions. Religion no longer will have an other-worldly aim, but vie with science in fulfilling worldly or social aspirations. Yet religion leads us to the Absolute, which is above the mere human and social world. For the essence of the religious consciousness is that man seeks to rise above all relativities, including such things as society or humanity, to empty all his symbols as he creates and recreates them in ceaseless experimentation. The mystic cannot be satisfied with a finite, and uncertainly reliable, object of worship. Man's normal impulses and desires are mutually modified and ordered in the religious attitude, and their complete organization and stability, which is the purpose of man's adjustment in the highest sense of the term, are forthcoming only when the object of adoration is eternal, absolute, perfect. Religion, which is a mode of human adaptation, thus consummates itself in more-than-human values; while at the same time it places human values beyond the shadow of doubt or conflict, leading man to act with an inner authority that transcends any external law or social convention, and "a faith that makes the dumb speak and the lame ascend the mountains".

ABSOLUTE OF THE MYSTIC.—The highest phase of religion cannot go beyond the all-inclusive thought which is my thought, thought which is exerting itself over the system of existences. This activation of one's own mind is the religious mystic's Absolute. "I am the Absolute" is the eternal music of creation which is resonant as myriad beings and things in grand and sweet concord. Though the Absolute excludes accidental things and concrete modes, it manifests itself in all systems of existence as society, and in all vital modes of association, which, indeed, open up in man the manifold avenues through which it is realized as feeling and

action. Thus society acquires a meaning and a value as an emblem or reflection of the Absolute; and the joys of life and love, of expression and service, become means of unfolding man's clear intuition and perfect joy. Such intuition and joy are ever expanding with man's love and thought for fellow creatures, even as the essence of the Absolute is not an existent being, nor a truth achieved or appropriated; but a task, and a process. Different in the category of thought from the Absolute, or from the deity without modes, are the gods and deities which "incarnate" themselves or appear in flesh among mortals, and embody the social values; and these stand in the same relation to the Absolute as a man's group, station, or office stands to society. Through his impulses and desires that bind him to groups and stations, man realizes his oneness with an actual synthetic social mind. Through his contemplation he bridges the chasm of separation between his mind and the all-exclusive universal mind. The latter is his mind in its pure function and essence, his Absolute. Among finite experiences it is the social that are most favourable to this expansion of mind and discernment of essence. The ideal social life is a perfect revelation of the true or the beautiful, i.e. of the supra-sensuous Absolute in so far as it can be discerned in human life and psyche. In phases of social life and relationships, wherever we find the immutable and eternal, glimpses of the reality penetrate us to the innermost depths and give a new and superhuman direction to our impulses and affections.

CHAPTER II

ROOTS OF RELIGION

ADJUSTMENT TO ENVIRONMENT.—Every organism, from an amoeba to a human being, seeks to maintain an essentially dynamic relation with his environment. Both the inner nature of the living creature and the external conditions of the environment undergo constant change. This brings about a tension in the organism which appears sometimes as a formless impulsion, but normally as a specific response to a concrete situation. In the simplest organisms, as well as in those highly developed, life is maintained fully and characteristically only through such tension and the corresponding organic adjustment. Different orders of organic behaviour—tropisms, instincts, or voluntary actions—are but ways in which this tension or unrest seeks release. The release may come sometimes from a physical object, as when a hungry dog obtains its meal of flesh; or from a situation, as when a soldier performs an heroic act amidst the applause of his comrades, or a lover seeks his beloved in a moonlit drive; or, again, from images and ideas, as when a poet or an artist finds release for his divine discontent in a form of beauty that never was on sea and land.

1 FEAR MOTIVE IN RELIGION.—Religious objects are particular types of ideas and images. The tension that finds itself in these is a particular collocation of normal human drives. Religious objects have sometimes been defined as ideas that inspire fear, as by Hobbes: "The fear of things invisible is the natural seed of religion." Similarly Ribot finds the fear motive in all religions, "from profound terror to vague uneasiness, due to faith in an unknown, mysterious, impalpable Power, able to render great services, and, more especially, to inflict great injuries." The difficulty of such a definition of religion arises from the fact that, even in skepticism, we find an effort to establish a close affinity between them and the totem. Plants and animals, or whatever the totem may be, are regarded often as friends or relatives,

man's brothers, fathers, and so forth. This fact of an ideal kinship is, indeed, far more important than the impulse of fear which the totem may excite. Freud over-emphasizes the fact of fear in order to subsume totemism under his generalization of the Oedipus Complex. In primitive religious observances the communion with the religious object that is sought, as well as the honors and gifts received from it, do not seem to imply the exclusive play of the fear impulse. This fact becomes more obvious in higher forms of religion, where the mystic seeks communion with his God, who stimulates the most tender feelings of filial devotion and even of man-woman love.

SIX MOTIVE—Again, religious objects recently have been sought to be explained as sublimations of sexual desire. Sex, more than any other human impulse, continuously changes in its direction and aim. It thrives on variety, and seeks its object in ever-new situations. Religious objects, on the other hand, are remarkably stable in their qualities, and the emotion that they excite maintains a sameness, which cannot be accounted for by the play of particular human drives with their incessant fluctuations.

INTELLECTUAL AND MORAL MOTIVES—THE QUEST FOR STABILITY.—Similarly, intellectual, and moral perplexities have also been considered as the potent source of religion. Man is believed to be in perpetual quest of causes of things in order to attain a conception of a rounded-off universe. When this quest fails, man manages to fill up the gap with the objects of his own creation which yield him not only peace, but also a feeling of relief from bewilderment. Both Bhand and McDougall seem to regard curiosity as one of the principal roots of both science and religion. It is hardly consonant with observation that ordinary human beings are so much obsessed with the search for causes. The more imperative problem for man is to adjust himself to his physical and social surroundings, and to introduce harmony among his conflicting inner urges. When nature and society fall short of the organic needs, an ideal world shaped by man's imagination comes to his rescue. Gods and angels, heaven and hell, extend the bounds of the universe and lend order and coherence to our responses to human beings and to the exigencies of existence. The conflict of impulses also resolves itself in the ideas of

for example, the transcendent and immortal self, belief in karma, the trial of a long past, or, again, in faith in an immutable cosmic justice. It is by thus proper that man frees himself from the bewildering experience of a variety of moods, joys, or sorrows, or from the inner dissatisfaction due to bafflement of elemental drives. He seeks stability and immutability because it is easier to adjust oneself to a uniform than to a changeful type of behaviour. The former involves less expenditure of energy. It is for this reason that a person whose store of organic energy has run short, as in illness, has to abstain from all social intercourse that he may recover what he has lost. The perplexities of the world similarly force persons to adopt the life of hermits and to live with nature, which is less changeful than the human environment, and ultimately with the changeless God. The same reason accounts for the conceptions of immortality and eternity in all religious systems. Probably this also serves as the unconscious motive of all forms of philosophic monism. The world of chaos yields its place to God's universe. Religious objects and beliefs thus ensure satisfaction and enjoyment, and guidance in action. The hypothesis of the genesis of religion as a causal explanation is hardly adequate.

Whatever human contrivance simultaneously fulfils a variety of needs attains stability, and effects a fairly unchanging quality of emotion, and a uniform mode of behaviour. The family, for instance, satisfies the impulses of sex, food, protection, self-assertion, etc., and the emotions that it excites among the different members continue to be the same in their nature even with the lapse of years.

RELIGIOUS MOTIVES VARIOUS AND BLENDED.—We must similarly look for the psychological roots of the religious object in a blending of a variety of impulses. The larger the number of impulses which blend together, the more real is the object worshipped. Such blending takes place in the ordinary person at rare moments under an intense stimulation; as, for example, when a physical catastrophe overwhelms him, or when he is overtaken suddenly by grievous sorrow or intense joy. In these moments all the impulses drain through a single channel, and experiences obtain a stability through a narrowing of the responses. In the religious person, as in the case of the artist, the welter

of opposed and conflicting impulses is resolved and order and stability in experience brought about without any independently adequate stimulus being required. The reorganization of impulses is here the result of gradual inner co-ordination. The latter process, which involves mental preparation and discipline, yields the most stable religious objects and beliefs. The process of imagination here constructs ideal objects which may, or may not, have reference to the stimulus; and these weave the impulses into a more satisfying fabric and bring about a mental poise. Man seeks fellow-man, and in his conception of God he reaches a cosmic gregariousness. Love which has its roots in sex impulse similarly reaches out to an all-encompassing source of Love. Man fears the mysterious powers of evil and darkness, and in the conception of the Primal Mother to whom bloody sacrifices are offered finds solace and guidance. Out of the raw materials of love, gregariousness, or self-preservation, or out of them all combined, religion fashions a stable attitude and feeling, stable through its power of inclusion. Such coalescence of impulses is brought about at emotional crises when man is beside himself with grief, joy, or fear, and it may be complete or partial. In partial blending one of the impulses gains the upper hand and dominates the rest. Thus we are familiar with the religion of fear, sexual religion, or militant religion. With many persons, strongly endowed with the impulse of self-preservation, religion promises gifts and rewards fulfilling balked desires in another world. With many others religion is coloured by the disturbances of the repression of a strong sex-attachment. Sometimes, again, the unrepresable impulse of aggression seeks satisfaction in bloody fights for the up and or defense of religion, sect, or creed. In such cases the religious object and belief are coloured by the dominant drive. As the set of impulses breaks loose, or makes up a new order one with another, such religions, consequently, yield no satisfaction and become imperatave. Sometimes, however, the dominance of a particular impulse or set of impulses persists in such manner that an all-inclusive mystical note is found in the religious experience, though this latter must be regarded as somewhat abnormal and limited. In a similar manner a great deal of poetry and art, of which the content is the ordered development of a special and limited experience

or a specific set of impulses, does not endure, or afford lasting satisfaction. A complete blending of impulses is manifested only in the higher types of mysticism, in which the animal impulses withdraw from their outward aims, and completely interpenetrate with one another and turn inwardly to the ideal object. As the *Diogenes Club* puts it —

"As the tortoise withdraws all its limbs
Let the wise man also do the same,
Withdrawing sense from worldly things.
This is the sign of the power of good."

In all such cases: (1) The coalescent group of impulses remains constant; (2) the object which satisfies the impulses assumes a character of stability; (3) the emotion that arises in the adjustment of these impulses to the ideal object comes to possess a specific unchanging quality; and (4) the complete integration of impulses and sentiments serves as the basis of a progressive simplification of the realisation of the unity and harmony of life in their fullness.

CO-ORDINATION IN ART AND RELIGION.—In all forms of great art we have a similar co-ordination of man's discordant impulses and their recombination in an ordered single response. By imaginative experience, the thousand inhibitions which prevent the full working out of our responses disappear, and man accordingly finds both rest and a new awareness of existence. It is in this manner that great literature or art, by bringing into play a large number of motor tendencies, which do not take place overtly, brings about an adjustment, and, interpolating with and organising the rest of man's experience, gives sanity and joy. Thus Aristotle defined tragedy long ago as "an imitation of an action effecting through Pity and Terror the correction and catharsis of such passions".

In religious experience the co-ordination and systematisation of the impulses reach the farthest limits. Here sets of impulses which, in ordinary, non-religious experience would be inhibited to give unrestricted scope to others, are blended and reconciled with one another; and, when all rivalry or conflict is dissolved, man feels that his contact with actuality has increased. Along with a new vitality the mystic develops a sense of immutability and all-inclusiveness of his experience,

bestowing a feeling of freedom, of relief and sanity. The mind ceases to be directed in one particular channel, but simultaneously and inherently responds through many. Herein lies the disinterestedness of religion, which serves as the basis of the mystic's clarity of vision. The mystic, on account of his detachment, does not see things from one aspect or standpoint only. He veritably "sees into the life of things", and there arises in his consciousness a complete certainty of his insight or inner vision. It is this feeling of insight, this sense of revelation, which is similarly characteristic of the greater kinds of art. The consciousness which arises in ecstasy leads itself inevitably to transcendental descriptions, as in the case of the religious mystic. As Richards observes: "'This Extase doth unperplex,' we seem to see things as they really are, and because we are freed from the bewilderment which our own maladjustment brings with it.

"The heavy and the weary weight
Of all this foolish world
Is lightened"

"Wordsworth's pantheistic interpretation of the imaginative experience in Tintern Abbey is one which in varying forms has been given by many poets and critics."¹

The blending or reconciliation of opposed impulses or sets of impulses is accordingly the ground-pattern of the most valuable æsthetic and religious responses. Indeed, in forms of religion which show a process of co-ordination through the influence of one dominating set of impulses, a distinct emotional tone is present, and we have a more or less complete identification of æsthetic and religious responses. The mystic passes like the poet through the whole gamut of intensive feelings, joy and sorrow, love and longing, hope and melancholy, and his devotional hymns may pass for lyrics of human passion. But the freely inquiring mind would gradually overthrow all self-reference, which the emotions, like the overt or incipient responses, must imply. It is only when religion passes into the activity of the intellect, rising

¹ *Principles of Literary Criticism*, pp. 222-3. The analysis has proved useful in interpreting the relations between art and religion.

above all relativities, that we meet with the highest phase of consciousness. It is then that man's vision is perfect and he has clear and impartial awareness of the world, independent of all attitudes and beliefs which are the conscious accompaniment of his successful adjustment to life.

IMAGINATION, THE CO-ORDINATOR.—We thus see that there are distinct stages of the development of religion as there are distinct phases of the organization of impulses. In ordinary, non-imaginative experience, if an impulse be isolated or inhibited, it brings in allied sets of impulses and there ensues bafflement and bewilderment. In all forms of imaginative experience the impulses are ordered and accepted, and the state of mind involves the least conflict, strain, or inhibition. In great kinds of art and emotional mysticism the impulse systems are modified and selected by one predominant thought or feeling. Thus Coleridge observes: "That synthetic and magical power, to which we have exclusively appropriated the name of imagination . . . reveals itself in the balance or reconciliation of opposite and discordant qualities . . . the sense of novelty and freshness, with old and familiar objects; a more than usual state of emotion with more than usual order; judgment ever awake and steady self-possession and enthusiasm and feeling, profound or vehement." In the familiar types of religious mysticism, imagination selects and orders the impulses and combines them into a stable pose in much the same manner. Thus outbursts of song during states of rapture are common among religious mystics, with whom, as with poets, "the sense of musical delight" is evident. It is here that we find a similarity of mental experience in the poet and the religious mystic. But the religious mystic has a superior power of organizing experience. Like the true poet, the religious mystic is impersonal and detached, but his integration of the impulses is more profound. This engenders a stronger feeling of acceptance and certainty in the case of religion. In art the symbols are mere symbols, while in religion these are real as well as figurative. Religion thus forces upon the mind the distinction between this world and the ideal world, and categorically affirms the reality of the latter. While art is indifferent to the distinction between the real and the unreal, religion is a conscious effort to seek the reality that underlies

the symbols. Unlike the artist, the religious mystic does not live in the realm of his own imagination; he lives in the realm of essence. The field of suppression in his case is diminished, the field of stimulation which he accepts is wider, and he can make a more comprehensive response. In the highest types of mystical experience, the emotions and sentiments which have a local and organic import play an unimportant rôle. The sense that the accidental and adventitious aspect of life has receded is much stronger, and the mystic sees it as it really is. Consequently his attitude-adjustment is the most plastic; neither a set emotion nor an intellectual formula can damage the wholeness and the integrity of his experience. His mind responds more freely, more fully, more finely, to all possible situations than does the ordinary mind. Hence the supreme place and function of religion in human life; for it is from religion that the ordinary person obtains his modes and patterns of response.

UNION, THEIR BLENDING AND ORDERED EXPRESSION.—All forms of imaginative experience, song or dance, magic or ritual, seek in order to fulfil some system of impulses not ordinarily in adjustment within itself or adjusted to the world. Each of these induces an attitude or elicits a form of behaviour indispensable to life and its expansion. The development of the arts shows that song or decoration, myth or observance, spring from man's imaginings in hours of great joy or grief, an upheaval of the emotions in critical situations, leading to the organization of the individual's attitude and experience. Thereupon follows a new response based on a new ordering of the impulses, and this reacts upon the rest of the organization of the individual. A more delicate adjustment or blending of impulses in any one field tends to promote it in others, inducing a feeling of increased competence and command of life. The evolution of the arts follows a general trend. A great deal of epic poetry, massive art, or primitive religion is content with the fully ordered development of comparatively special and limited experiences with a definite emotion. The maturer forms of poetry, art, and religion are built out of impulses and interests which no longer run in the same direction. Opposed and discordant sets of impulses here blend together. Man's responses in higher forms of imaginative experience bring into play far

more of his personality than is possible in experiences of a more defined emotion.

URGES IN RELIGIOUS EXPRESSION.—In lower forms of religion the harmony of impulses is only partial and the cult or ritual exhibits the natural expression of the dominant urges. This explains not only the multiplicity of spirits but also their transient character in primitive religion. Thus the primitive conception of spirits is far different from the religious conception of a soul or spirit of mature people. The spirits are ascribed to an infinite number of objects and situations which draw together a group of impulses. Thus tools and implements, plants and animals, whatever objects centre round the life-interests, attract a group of impulses and elicit an affectionate and sympathetic regard, and the primitive man no sooner shifts his allegiance than he finds that a conflict has arisen between his daily routine of life and some feature of his environment. In higher religion it is discipline and elevated meditation which bring about a complete blending of the urges and realise a superior harmony. Accordingly, in elevated mysticism, the coalescence of impulses is the basis of an intensive perception of Unity. There is, first, the ordering of the world into the unity of an idea. Secondly, the mystic does not merely conceive but also realises in sentiment and action the unity of life. Such is the distinction between philosophy and mysticism. In primitive mysticism the conception of *mana* or spirit is extremely vague and confused, though it underlies some sort of confused unity of life. Thus the *mana* is attributed to men and animals, to plants and even to inorganic objects. The primitive mind is less capable of broad generalisations and conceptual schemes, and yet the idea of unity emerges, though uncertain and ill-defined. In higher forms of mysticism the experience of an eternal mode of existence which transcends space and time, and in which a final and complete unification is postulated, is fundamental. Here the emotions are calm and subdued, the ecstasy is pure, and the conception of identity is clarified. In lower forms of mysticism, on the other hand, along with a blurred conception of unity of life, due to feeble power of abstraction or generalisation, the emotional excitement which the religious object elicits is more intense, though unstable and erratic. The sense of mystery is here distributed

among a vast number of spirits, each of which centres for the time being the greatest awe, reverence, and affection. Anything that is remote or mediate is disregarded ; and the objects of worship are characteristically determined by the region and occupation, moulded by the original patterns set by the everyday interests of life, or by unusual experiences and situations.

CHAPTER III

PRIMITIVE RELIGION

RELIGION OF THE HUNTER.—When the forest overawed man he was startled by the flutter of the leaves, the hoot of an unfamiliar bird, or the distant howl of a carnivore. The life of man was one constant tension of the senses. In fact, man's sensory organs themselves are moulded by the inexorable demands of an environment where the least dullness of the senses leads to death. Danger lurks in the tangled wood, the eddy of the stream, or the prairie fire. In the mysterious obscurity of the jungle creep animals which are superior to man in the endowment of acute and specialised senses. For this cause man is in continual fear of his environment. His tools and weapons, no doubt, give him some autonomy and security. Such tools and weapons are, biologically speaking, extra-bodily organs brought into requisition as man's original endowment of senses and instincts proves inadequate for survival. But such tools are sometimes of no avail in man's struggle in the forest. Hence there develops a set of ideas, images, and feelings which are unified into a system of apperception and which express that desire for power, that ascendancy over nature, and that constant fear and anxiety which are dominant factors in the psychological situation. The shaman, when he becomes possessed by spirits, shows the same reactions of fear and suspense which dominate the experiences of the hunting peoples. Among the forest Veddas, the aboriginal inhabitants of Ceylon, the spirit of the dead man speaks through the mouth of the shaman in hoarse, guttural accents, saying that he approves of the offering, that he will assist his kinsfolk in hunting, and often stating the direction in which the hunting party will go. This is followed by a ceremonial feast of food which has been offered to the spirit and in which men, women, and children participate. All fear and uncertainty disappear as the spirit's kindness and helpfulness in hunting are assured by straightforward invocations as well

as by communion through ceremonial participation of offerings. The vague generalised impressions of fear and power of a hostile environment are, indeed, implicit in all primitive religions. In the first place, man continually devises ideal objects and situations with a view not only to gain greater ascendancy over nature, but also to secure a more generous fulfilment of his instincts and wishes than the environment affords. Religion, therefore, like all other cultural objects, is an instrument of adaptation. In the second place, religion transmits the experiences of man in the past, thereby subserving easy and effective adaptation. In his struggle in the forests, meadows, and swamps, man's images and feelings would often centre round the stronger and more cunning animals, which give him no peace. These he seeks in his ideal creations; and when these are on spirit, not in their bodies, they no longer act as his enemies, but assure him protection as well as bestow upon him powers which he vainly seeks in his real concrete environment. There is no religion more universal and more living than the cult of the animal spirit amongst the Bushmen of Africa and the Australian aborigines, as well as the primitive tribes of North America. It is very interesting to note how some of the Indian tribes seek their guardian spirit. At the time of puberty, when the vital changes make man especially susceptible to new images and feelings, he repairs to the woods and lives in isolation in a crude hut or tent. It is there that the guardian spirit comes to him in a dream or vision. It is a spirit, animal, bird, or human, with whom henceforth he enters into an intimate personal relationship. Not merely do the spirits of animals protect directly, but centred round them there also develop taboos and myths, dances and cries, rituals and ceremonies, which all play the part of reconciling man to powers that are too formidable for him to cope with in his concrete environment. As examples, in North America or Siberia, Africa or India we observe among hunting peoples a projection of their general attitude of fear and power of the mysterious and tremendous in the environment to their images and concepts. The senses of primitive peoples are constantly under high stimulation. Off and on, after a surfeit, they are subject to long intervals of food scarcity, during which they exist in a state of general passivity, muscular and sensory, combined with concentration

upon a vague cosmic power. Sometimes they deliberately seek dreams by living in solitude and by fasting. Such psychic states favour suggestion, and it is in these that religion, art, magic, and totem have originated, all mingled together. In these emotional states the appearances of animals and plants, of mountains and rivers, sun and moon, with other natural phenomena, mingle with the current realities, and the supernatural encroaches upon the daily routine of life. Primitive men, for whom the animal and the vegetable species, and, generally speaking, the world of nature, have an intense interest and significance, trace descent from or affiliation with the animals and plants, sun, moon, and stars; and a belief is engendered that they can influence human destiny. In defending himself against dangerous beasts, in collecting edible plants, in securing favourable weather, primitive man has recourse to supernatural means. The magical claims over the vegetable and the animal world or over the sun or the moon depend, in the first place, on the establishment of a sort of kinship or affinity. Such kinship or affinity is strengthened by the benefits and advantages which primitive man secures or imagines himself to have secured through spell and ritual. With the animal guardian spirits, totem animals, and plants, a closer affinity is sought to be established by means of mimetic rites. The movement or flight of animals or birds, or the activities involved in their capture and use, become patterns of primitive man's ceremonies. Not merely by carrying out dreams, or by dancing and mimetic movements typical of the totem animals, does he seek to adjust himself to the mysterious and the unknown. By noting omens, by practising divination, or by ordeals, primitive man furnishes himself with valuable ideas, emotional attitudes, and modes of behaviour which carry him over the perilous situation. When rainless weather burns the crops and rainfall is to be secured, man in his moment of uncertainty and suspense ascends the hill-top and hurls stones towards the valley, conjuring up in his mind's eye the picture of the rumbling of rain-clouds and an abundant shower of rain which saves the crops of his fields. Before a hunt, expedition, or war, or any undertaking fraught with uncertainty and producing an uncertain emotional tension, the typical ritual prescribes the reproduction of types of behaviour associated with a successful

enterprise, the emotional tension is released, and the impasse in conduct, which threatens ruin, is got over by pre-established standardised behaviour. When, however, man is powerless to deal with illness or death, with a scourge that sweeps away young and old, or finds himself too feeble for an implacable enemy who pursues him with relentless purpose, his baffled anger and hate express themselves in black magic. The exorcism of spirits of disease and death and of implacable enemies repeats in formulae, gestures, and mimetic behaviour the reactions of fear. Similarly, sorcery contains in its most typical ritual of stabbing, burying the bone, and mimic destruction of the enemy, and in the text of its formulae, a reproduction of the various gestures, words, and types of behaviour, which we can watch in the natural vent of emotions.¹ In such ways primitive magic or spell always subserves the purpose of securing a new mental adjustment when a situation arises which is beyond man's common knowledge and effort. The primitive rite, carried out in a fixed and definite form with the end deliberately set before the mind, furnishes valuable practical guidance in man's adjustment to the perilous moment. The primitive creeds and rites not only draw into their sphere illness, bodily decay, accident, or death, prescribing adequate ideas and valuable attitudes, which contribute to an inner adjustment in the moment of danger and uncertainty; but also gradually comprehend man's diverse interests such as those centred round the chase or courtship, amusement or recreation, and these dramatically reflect the individual's inner urges and conducts, providing at the same time a permanent expression of the deeper spirit of tribal unity and solidarity.

RELIGION OF THE SHEPHERD.—A pastoral community reshapes its religious attitudes in a different manner. The herds and flocks assure a stable food supply. There is no more coarse stimulation of the senses, no more perilous ardour of the chase. No longer do the pursuit, capture, and use of wild animals serve as models of man's rituals, but animal-raising and operations of the dairy form the basis of the religious ceremonies. Among the Todas of the Nilgiris of Southern India certain of the buffaloes are regarded as more

¹ See Malinowski's *work on Anthropology, Magic, Science and Religion*, 1913 edition.

sacred than the rest and their care is associated with much ceremonial. Rivers observes: "The sacred animals are attended by men especially set apart who form the Toda priesthood, and the milk of the sacred animals is churned in dairies which may be regarded as the Toda temples, and are so regarded by the people themselves. The ordinary operations of the dairy have become a religious ritual, and ceremonies of a religious character accompany nearly every important incident in the lives of the buffaloes."¹ Thus the movements of the buffaloes from one grazing ground to another, the first milking and the giving of salt have become occasions of ceremonial. The ritual stands in a definite relation to the gods, for these beings are mentioned in the dairy formulae of the ritual, the general character of which indicates that they must be regarded as prayers. The dairies form a complicated organization and vary in the order of sanctity. In some dairies the restrictions of the dairyman's conduct are more numerous and the ritual of milking and churning is more complex. In a contrasted manner, the extensive sacrifice of animals among the pastoral tribes in Upper Burma is an incentive to cattle-breeding on a large scale, and in fact those tribes which have less ceremonial ritual are less successful in the production of livestock. It appears that the pastoral folks in Burma do not sacrifice more animals than they can afford.² Among more organized pastoral folk life is attuned still less to the flutter of leaves, the movement of animals, or the cry of birds, but more to the seasonal migration of the flocks, to the procession of the sun and stars which overlook the desert or prairie. The whims and caprices of a mysterious power, with the associated awe and supplication, are relegated to the background. The shepherd develops ideas, images, and feelings of continuity and solidarity. Among pastoral communities, property cannot crystallize, and discipline and authority are centred in the patriarch. His wisdom, imparted by the experience of years, dictates certain rigid rules of social control for implicit obedience, which is the bond of society. Handing down the accumulated experience of the past, he binds the present with the

¹ Rivers, W. H. R., *The Todas*, p. III.

² See *Proceedings of the International Congress of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences*, 1906.

generations yet unborn. Flocks and men prosper and multiply together by chains of action and interaction extending beyond the present, which bring about a necessary inner adjustment. The shepherd is one with his flocks, and his tender care for them is idealized into images of beneficent spirits or protecting angels. The flocks improve in type by breeding and selection, causing ideas and visions of perfected humanity to arise. The procession of the sun, moon, and stars, and the passage of the seasons, the long, tedious marches across limitless open spaces by day and by night, where nothing intervenes to titillate the senses, are favourable for kindling thoughts of space and eternity. Thus there arise religious beliefs of eternity and solidarity, warmed with an intensive emotion, which not only has a survival value in the pastoral stage, but also is its legacy to all humanity. Such warm emotion is still felt by many pastoral communities in Northern India, who worship the Divine Cowherd. He is the protector of these flocks against drought or thunderstorm; he takes them to the meadows in the morning and returns home with them. He is the darling of the housewives, plays havoc with their pots of milk and sweets, and at the same time now and then intimates his vision of eternity. In some cults he is the symbol of eternal youth, and many a song and legend of love have sprung up where it is difficult to distinguish between the passion of human love and the yearning for the Divine. Philosophical systems have also evolved explaining the cosmic process of creation as the never-ending pursuit of the beloved by God. The utter self-abandon and forgetfulness of the cowherd's maidens is regarded here as typifying religious devotion. Throughout India passionate love songs of the shepherd's daughters addressed to the Divine Cowherd are sung and listened to as expressing intense religious fervour. It is in this manner that a pastoral religion weaves its fabric of ideas and visions from the relations of the people's life to the animals and natural phenomena, to social habits and interests to which they become accustomed. In India it is the fleeting sunshine, cloud, and rainfall, rather than the profound change of landscape and sky experienced by a pastoral folk in long marches along untried spaces, which have composed the shepherd's vision.

RELIGION OF THE AGRICULTURIST.—In the agricultural stage man's culture scheme is found, again, to be profoundly modified. There is now an interweaving of the elements of the environment in a new cultural synthesis. In agricultural life man establishes new relations with plants, animals, and natural phenomena. These involve different sets of cults and doctrines which henceforth control and direct man's behaviour in all its aspects. Neither animal guardian spirits nor mountain gods now overlook human destiny. The fluctuations of rainfall, the dramatic contrasts of the seasons, of dawn, noon, and evening, now dominate man's life and interests. These weave together all the variegated threads of ideas, emotions, and impulses into one complex culture which differs entirely in its elements from that of the hunter or the shepherd. The change in the mental pattern is reflected not merely in religion, art, ritual, or myth, but also in social intercourse. From the Gods, Dyas and Indra of Vedic cosmogony, to the mother goddess worshipped with pig and fowl by the aboriginal tribes of India during times of famine, we have the roots of religion in the agriculturist's profound interest in rainfall. The Mother Earth, the Mother River, and the Mother Cow all nourish man under their fostering care, and his resulting vision composes around an imagery of work sanctified by patient resignation to nature which comes very near fatalism. Earth and water, season and crops, all play a part in religious belief and practice.

Throughout India the first ploughing and sowing operations are always accompanied by the worship of gods and goddesses with offerings. In some parts it is the earth-god, in others it is Ganesa, and in some other parts it is the earth-Goddess who is invoked by prayers, magical rites, and gifts. Sowing ceremonies are accompanied by communal dances and feasts among the primitive agricultural tribes and castes; some celebrate them with fecundity rites in the night, when the village invokes the fertility of the earth by abandoning itself to licence. On the other hand, when there is great danger to crops due to uncertainty of the monsoon rain or from pests, there are widespread seasonal fasting and abstinence from sexual intercourse. The harvesting operations are accompanied by the ceremonial cooking and eating of the new rice almost everywhere in India. Collective rural

observations and immediate magical rites which punctuate the agricultural calendar in India, promoting the fertility of the soil, the fall of man, intensity of sunshine, and the growth and due harvesting of the crops enable an agricultural community to take over periods of agricultural suspense or misfortune more easily, while these also invite to further toil. The times chosen for communal feast, fast, or holiday are exceedingly appropriate and hardly interfere with the routine of agricultural operations.²

RELIGION OF THE INDUSTRYMAN.—In the industrial and manufacturing stage man has other forces to serve. These forces, however, have not been woven into the pattern of man's religious belief. It is true that artisans and craftsmen in different parts of the world adore the deity of the implements, and of trade and industry, which they install in the hall or temple of their guild. But the power of machinery, which acts suddenly and sometimes pitilessly, and which to some extent is inscrutable for the modern worker, commands no reverence. Man has increased in knowledge, and the forces that formerly perplexed, overawed, or overwhelmed him are well under his control. He has also learnt to distinguish between vision and reality, and is less disturbed by daydreams and nightmares. Man's ideas and emotions are now attached more to fellow-men than to the environment, and his images and ideals compose for the most part a human vision.

IRREGULARITIES IN SOCIAL EVOLUTION.—The above account gives too schematic a view of mental evolution to be real. Social evolution does not follow a logical sequence. The order of development differs in different regions, and sometimes the stages interpolate. It follows that the contents and patterns of culture, including religious belief and observance, are as little reducible to a fixed order. It is the environment which organises man's images, ideas, and thoughts into psychic patterns. Through the cumulative force of repetition of these mental activities in the same environment, they become stereotyped into culture or social heritage, which becomes as important as the environment in selecting man's behaviour.

OBJECT, GROWTH, AND VALUE OF RELIGION.—Among the culture patterns, religion represents man's attempt to discover

² See Malinowski, *Principles of Comparative Economics*, vol. II.

a stable and immutable object to which he can turn amidst the continuous scene-shifting of his outer environment as well as the constant conflict between his inner drives. When man has found out his religious object, no natural phenomenon will overawe or bewilder him. No longer will the forms and forces of nature be full of whims and caprices, but they will become so interesting a study that a complex reciprocal behaviour will be forthcoming. All his inhibited instincts and desires, and their correlated ideas and emotions, are harmoniously blended in the religious object or representation, and his inner longings are satisfied. In the past man's range of knowledge was very limited. His physical helplessness in the face of a hostile environment, always full of surprises for him, led his immature mind to picture an unseen world inhabited by influences, powers, and spirits. These were made up of fixed and inchoate desires of power, fear, self-assertion, and self-abasement, which were inhibited in the primitive man's environment. The primitive man also was but dimly conscious of himself. He was not given to introspection. He was more concerned with his outward life and safety than with his mental processes. His understanding of the reality, therefore, would often come from occasional spells of daydream and hallucination. The distinctions between self and the external world were not clear and well-defined. Later the idea of self developed, and man began to regard the forces with which he came into contact in what is called an anthropomorphic fashion. The images of external nature came to be fashioned after his own image. These might be called sometimes demons, sometimes gods. Yet, whether they were demons or gods, they arose in the course of man's constant and strenuous effort to secure from his environment the satisfaction of his organic needs. The inner feelings of perplexity, awe, or wonder, which arise as a result of man's failure to establish his little self in harmonious relation with the whole of the environment that he knows, engenders the religious attitude. The fulfilment that is denied in the physical environment is sought on the plane of ideas and images. Thus man creates a new world of living beings by the side of the real concrete world. The former gives him inner harmony and peace of mind, while the latter always disintegrates the mind which cannot, but always

seeks to, grapple with and organise the whole of reality. When the distinction between self and image is not strong, gods and angels, demons and powers, ancestors and animal spirits, participate in the ordinary routine of life. Wars and chases, rituals and ceremonies, are all enlivened by their presence. The earth and heaven intermingle; but, as man's mind matures, images and the external reality are completely dissociated. Heaven is separated from the earth, but without heaven the earth becomes too alien a place to be lived in. For the primitive man, as for the primal organism, every object at once stimulates and satisfies the whole nature. There is a coalescence of needs and interests, however temporary it may be, in a single object or situation. For this reason facts and fancies, ideas and realities, activities and rituals, food and worship, intermingle. By all this interaction life is enriched and feelings intensified. On the other hand, tools and machinery, organisations and culture, objects of the modern world for the most part, elicit only specialised and isolated types of interest. Daily work, having lapsed into mere economic activity, does not satisfy a variety of impulses and feelings as before. Likewise the tool is a mere appliance for work. It does not represent any other reality beyond its specialised function. Fields and farms, forests and rivers, and even the sun and the moon, have become mere physical realities, and do not elicit fancies and images, poetic and religious feelings. Yet it is the nature of man to seek the fulfilment of groups of coalescent impulses and interests in single objects. Since the external world fails, man seeks it in his human world and social intercourse. Even this proves inadequate, because we treat our fellow-men as instruments, not as ends in themselves. The ideals of solidarity of labour, or the social brotherhood of man, can yield the same order of satisfaction as religious beliefs do only when the ideas prevail that man is god-in-man, and that human life has an infinite spiritual worth.

CHAPTER IV

MAGIC AND RITUAL

RELIGION AS SOLVENT OF UNREST.—We have seen that the chief function of religion is to offer a satisfaction to as large and varied a group of human impulses as possible. Further, the satisfaction must be a durable one, so that man's inner conflict can be resolved for times to come. That the religious object is one that endures is evidenced by the ideas of eternity and immutability found in almost every religion. Religion thus overcomes the psychic segregation which is the inevitable outcome of man's failure to understand or to adapt himself to his milieu. When man by his images and representations, such as guardian spirits and tutelary divinities, ancestors, mythological heroes, the tribal all-father, or the mother of the race, comes into a harmonious relation with the whole of reality that he can envisage, there is a resolution of inner conflict and he finds himself at peace with self and the universe. This is also what we understand by the development of personality, which has its roots in the organization of both man's inner instincts, images, and ideas, and the forces operating in the universe, into a unitary whole.

RELIGION AND SEX INSTINCT.—But religion solves man's internal unrest in other phases of his existence. All kinds of conflict that arise, for instance, in the course of man's conduct in the family, the tribe, and the community, similarly call for solutions. Man's instincts continually are thwarted or baffled altogether, and stand out rebellious. The same imprecations or curses which man hurls against disease or death, illness, accident, or misfortune, are uttered by him when strong, urgent drives, like sex or food-getting, are denied by the human milieu. Religion then intervenes to establish man's peace with society. Sex, which is exclusive and disintegrating, is transformed by religion into a constructive force. Religion and society combine their resources, and religion earmarks certain sex relationships as undecurable and proscribed, yet leaves a wide field within which this

impulse may be satisfied. Sex taboos are universal in every society. A violation of these is both a crime and a sin. In the primitive community such taboos exclude whole groups of people from any sex relations, and these taboos work through injurious or sacred properties of the prohibited object. The uncleanness associated with all sexual processes is marked out for such taboos. Thompson gives the following instances of sexual taboo among the Semitic peoples: (a) menstruation taboo; (b) cohabitation taboo; (c) child-birth taboo; (d) girls of irregular menstruation supposed to be possessed of supernatural power; and (e) men fearful of interfering with the sacred rights of gods and goddesses. In primitive societies adultery, incest between near relatives, or the breach of exogamous limits, local or totemic, are all prevented through the operation of sex taboos. The violation of these is looked upon with so much dread and horror that it brings in its train its own condign punishment. Such prohibitions and exclusions limit considerably the operation of sex; but, as a safety-valve, there are excitements to sex intercourses on certain religious occasions and festivals. These are times of dancing and personal display, when food is lavishly consumed, stimulants used, and the usual restraints are relaxed.¹ Thus the taboos, on the one hand, keep sex within limits, guard the family, and protect marriage; the ceremonies and festivals, on the other hand, elicit sex and guide courtship and the sex interest. In animal marriage, the continued relation between the mates depends upon sexual jealousy, mutual attachment, and the innate tendency of the male to protect and nourish the female. In human marriage the biological safeguards are strengthened by religious sanction or social pressure, which establishes a new relation between the partners. On the biological bond between man and woman a more advanced religion superimposes a sacred tie which binds together the sexes for lifelong fidelity and service. Nothing has contributed more to social evolution than the partnership in family work and family faith prescribed by religion. In Hinduism this partnership continues even beyond death, and there are noble myths and legends which circulate among the people inculcating the doctrine that there is through scores of time no living

¹ See Mahowald, *Sex and Religion in Savage Society*, chapter 12.

separation between the husband and the wife, once the sacred bond of marriage is entered into. In all communities a good deal of sex freedom, however, is permitted on certain ceremonial occasions, such as spring festivals or harvest gatherings; while phallicism represents a world-wide cult. In many countries also we have forms of religious prostitution associated with temples and holy places. Through the intervention of religious attitude an egocentric drive like sex is linked with the universal forces of the conception and creation of life, of fertility and reproduction in man and nature during spring-time, and the sex act becomes a ceremonial observance. Religion through this means seeks to effect the control, sublimation, or projection of sex into channels of religious ritual and practice, diverting it of the gross physical value which is disruptive of society. In Hinduism, for instance, sex has been transformed into the symbol of cosmic creation, of the primal mother that furnishes complex and interwoven values which widen out into diverse socialized impulses and social relations. Religion, the permanent source of appeal of man in his perplexities and thwarted drives, at first draws sex into its sphere, then charts and represses it, or secures the rebel's acquiescence by sublimating or projecting it into sacred and ceremonial channels; and finally it establishes the ideals of purity and cleanliness, both in the individual and in society.

RELIGION AND FOOD INSTEAD.—A similar transformation of the food-getting activity, which ranks with sex as a fundamental concern of man, has been accomplished by religion. Among hunting communities the chase is always full of danger, and yet fear has to be conquered and teamwork established. Thus the hunting season is opened by songs, dances, and feasts, the animals which are to be killed are propitiated and worshipped, and food is ceremoniously distributed. Some tribes have songs and mimetic dances, which fervently anticipate the chase and the successful completion of the collective adventure. Religion by such means conquers the impulse of fear, introduces zest and attraction to the pursuit, and, by special taboos and prescriptions, minimizes its risks and contributes to its success. The animals killed are brought and presented to the village in a ceremonial procession, and the instincts of self-assertion

and self-display of the hunting-folk are fully satisfied in the songs and rituals that follow. All these have great survival value for a hunting community. Amongst primitive peoples timidity or desertion is not unusual, but must be stamped out, and concerted action in the pursuit of game brought about by an appeal to the instincts of self-assertion, ambition, and sport. Totemic beliefs and observances, again, represent among certain primitive tribes an attempt to select some plants and animals of the region which are useful and edible, and then, by impressing a joint taboo and reverential attitude towards the totemic species, to contribute economically to their vitality or multiplication. Totem objects are, indeed, in many cases, food objects of the totem sects. In Australia most of the sects have as their totems various edible plants and animals. The totems of the Mendar tribes in India include maize, rice, and the juice of blackberry; the totem of the Hopi Indians is maize. ■ In India there are also many taboo trees and plants which are inedible and poisonous. In all these we see an effort to regulate the food-seeking activity and eliminate its risks and dangers, which in savage societies are so often the cause of distress and suffering. Religion not only contributes to assure stable conditions of food supply, but also emphasises in public ceremonies mutual obligations during a common food-enterprise. Amongst many pastoral tribes, occupational initiation is celebrated by making the novice milk a cow on an auspicious day in the presence of the whole kindred, and the success of the ceremony ensures plenty and prosperity to the household. Amongst the primitive agriculturists of India we find elaborate mimetic dances in which men and women recapitulate the different stages of agricultural operations, such as preparation of the soil, sowing, and harvesting. Such dances are associated with the principal festivals, as the *Magha* festival among the Chota Nagpur tribes. ■ It is well known also how, among many primitive tribes, the sowing operation is preceded by mimetic or actual sex-intercourse, or dances of groups of men and women singing obscene songs; and such observance is considered as ensuring the fertility of soil, and minimising the risks of crop production. Fecundity of women amongst the Mundari tribes of India is associated with prosperity in agriculture. Thus when there is a goodly

number of conceptions in the village the agricultural prospects of the year are believed to be most hopeful. "The Greeks and Romans sacrificed pregnant victims to the goddesses of corn and of the earth, doubtless in order that the earth might teem, and corn swell in the ear." Analogously, the magical value of pregnant women to communicate fertility was a widespread belief. Austrian and Bavarian peasants give the first-fruit to a pregnant woman to make the tree bear abundantly. Naobar Islanders cause pregnant women and their husbands, and Ormoco Indians cause pregnant women, to sow the seed to ensure a good crop. In some tribes the blood shed at the circumcision and subincision of boys, and also the foreskin, are regarded as possessing fertilizing value, so are buried in proximity to the crop which it is desired to cultivate.¹ In all these beliefs and practices religion adds zest and attractiveness to the strenuous work of preparation of the fields and eliminates fear or uncertainty due to the vagaries of the seasons. The recapitulation of agricultural operations in folk dances, mimetic or actual sex intercourse in the meadows, as well as the sacrifice of pregnant women, all serve the same purpose of contributing to make cultivation a success among primitive agriculturists, whose tools are crude and inefficient, and who can hardly cope with the misfortunes and accidents which beset agriculture. Among the more organised agricultural communities we have harvest feasts and festivals, which at first release the emotional tension due to uncertainty about the crop in primitive husbandry, and gradually develop into thanksgiving to a beneficent providence. The formal bestowal of gifts to priests according to certain strict observances, and the ceremonial distribution of the surplus crop to all village functionaries, express the desire for display, the esteem for accumulation, and the social obligation, which are all valuable assets for an agricultural people. Nor are the gods, spirits, or demons forgotten. The guardian deities of village communities, the spirits of the woods and waters, the mother goddesses who inflict disease and death upon men and cattle, all these are appeased by a ceremonial offering of food. For it is food through which the primitive man first directly experiences

¹ Frazer, *The Golden Bough*, quoted by A. S. Woodburn in *The Relation between Religion and Science*.

the mercy and generosity of the mysterious and unknown powers. By a sacrificial offering he anticipates the blessings of the spirit, god, or demon. In the higher religions the belief in the beneficent providence is further endowed with a symbolical significance, and the participation in food comes to be regarded as a sacrament, a communion with God, the bestower of life and livelihood.

PRIVATE AND SOCIAL RELIGION.—The impulses of sex and food build up the home and the family. Religious rites and ceremonies associated with these impulses come early, therefore, into the sphere of the family priest and the women of the household. Yet a domestic observance or ritual is also a public communal event. A transgression of a domestic ritual is treated as a crime punishable by the whole community. Such punishment often takes the form of social ostracism, when the primitive horror of a novel act or the ancient fear of the unknown has been mitigated to some extent. Accordingly, while religion contributes to the integrity of the family by controlling and chastening sex and by inculcating reverence for food as the sustainer of the household, the violation of a rite is treated both as a domestic calamity and a social crime. Birth, adolescence, marriage, and death, which are the most significant events of the household, are also the chief occasions of religious observance. With the differentiation of the family organisation from the tribe and the community, a great part of religion comes to be regarded as a private observance, though none the less a public concern. The reason is not far to seek. Man must act in unison with the members of his family in his most vital concerns and in his most fundamental desires. Enacted in the presence of his nearest kindred, man's religious ritual becomes living and real.

MAGIC AND ITS ALLIANCE WITH RELIGION.—Amongst all peoples such crises in life as conception, pregnancy, and birth are associated with a crop of magical rites and beliefs which have their origin in man's perennial interest in sex and reproduction. A vast number of magical beliefs and practices passes for religion among civilized peoples, so far as the prevention of barrenness, causation of sex, protection of the expectant mother against miscarriage or premature and painful delivery, etc., are concerned. It is true that

science is gradually banishing her bastard sister magic from such fields, but where science fails magic rules. There is no need to deery magic, which in most cases represents a form of observation by trial and error, and thus represents really the crude beginning of science. Where causal connection cannot be established and experiments are impossible, magic formulates a hypothesis. Suggestion then operates, and in cases such as those mentioned nervous disorder and barrenness are actually cured or a premature child-birth avoided. Religion then comes as an ally of magic, and magical practices, charms, amulets, rituals, and incantations are incorporated into a system of socio-religious observances. The rites performed at the time of puberty ("second marriage" among the Hindus) may be mentioned here. The girl is kept in seclusion within the four walls of a room for five days, during which she is enjoined not to see the face of her husband. On the fifth day she has to perform certain rites, which are nothing but dramatic representations of the period from pregnancy to child-birth. Thus a small doll made of barley is touched on her womb and glided down, signifying conception and birth. Then the doll is placed on her lap and she gives it suck. On the same day the girl is ceremonially bathed and, decked with new clothes, comes back into the household.

BIRTH CEREMONIAL.—Similarly at birth there are various ceremonies of purification which are undertaken by various peoples. In India, for instance, birth causes ceremonial defilement, and there are gradual stages of the mother's progress back to ritual purity. The boy or girl is also regarded as impure until some ceremonies are performed. In one of these the ears are pierced and the officiant says: "See what is good with the eyes, hear what is good with the ears, smell what is good with the nose, taste what is good with the mouth." In most such communities the rejoicing of the community at the new birth, their participation in the glory of the motherhood, as well as the dedication of the new-born to the community or to the gods, are all evident.

INITIATORY RITES—MISTERY.—When a boy or girl comes of age there are performed rites of initiation. Among primitive peoples these are hidden in secrecy and comprise obscene rites which celebrate the advent of maturity either

actually tested or enacted in a mimetic performance. Sex maturity is regarded as an object of tribal pride and hence of ceremonial rejoicing. The significance of the institution of dormitory amongst the primitive tribes of India centres round the performance of religious rites, calculated to educate the novices in sex-matters as well as in social and economic obligations. Sometimes we find such dormitories for segregating the unmarried of both sexes. It is in the bachelors' house that trophies of the annual hunt, weapons, musical instruments, etc., are kept. Indeed, these are schools of tribal tradition and mysticism, and train the young for taking up the duties and responsibilities of tribal life. There is also another aspect of an initiation ceremony, namely, the ceremonial expression of the value of tribal mysteries and sacred culture-objects. When the temptations of youth are too strong, and a revolt of sex or self-assertion is likely to endanger social cohesiveness, religion intervenes to resolve a possible inner conflict. Through the pomp, grandeur, and mystery of the initiation ceremony, which exhibits the existence of a supreme power from which tribal law and morality are derived, sex and self-assertion are conducted into legitimate channels. The novice henceforth can cope with the development of sex and bodily powers with less mental strain. In advanced civilisations the initiation ceremony symbolises the advent of a strenuous life of austerity and self-control dedicated to the cause of learning. In the ceremony of the investiture of the sacred thread, for instance, among the Hindus, the novice, who is then taught by the preceptor the sacred verse of illumination by truth (*gayatri*), takes the vow of celibacy, and there is a mimetic performance first of departure for a distant seat of learning, amid the wallings of the family, of an austere student clad in deer-skin, with his staff, books, and a bundle of rice ceremoniously presented; and, secondly, of his home-coming as a prospective householder, well-equipped in all the arts and sciences. Throughout India, in the homes of Brahmins, a small drama is enacted, reminiscent of the old days when the young boy left his family to seek knowledge, perhaps never to return home, or to come back after many years, fully prepared for his domestic and civic duties. The journey abroad and return home now have passed into mere mimetic

ceremonies in the Brahmin's household, but the sacred thread still continues to be worn throughout his lifetime. The thread is threefold, symbolical of the three qualities of a man's mind—reality, activity, and ignorance—and the man the wearer is required to set itself only to reality.

MARRIAGE, A RELIGIOUS CEREMONY.—Next comes marriage, which in both primitive and higher civilisations is a religious ceremony, and which must be public and carried out by the would-be partners in a set manner. Where law is absent, religion inculcates the socially desirable marital behaviour and inflicts punishment for departure from it, and the whole community by its presence sets thereto its seal of approval, and enforces it by public enactment. Indeed, the public character of the marriage ceremony is a guarantee of homogeneity and uniformity in the relations between the sexes. The law of exogamy, and the dual organization and classificatory system of relationship to which it gave rise amongst many primitive tribes, could only have been maintained by the injunctions and penalties of religion. Various rites characterising the biological and economic aspects of the marital relations gather round the ceremony, picturing definitely the issues of the future. Thus symbols drawn from plants and animals, or directly from sex life or the sex organs, which represent fertility, virility, or reproduction, are quite commonly used in marriage rituals. Other rites indicate the economic interdependence of husband and wife when a family is started. Some other rites emphasise the change of status or the introduction of a new unit. In higher religions the magical rites and practices intended to bring together the boy and girl sexually are left to women or to servants of inferior social status, and do not form the essentials of the marriage ceremony. Similarly the rites which are vestiges of primitive marriage by capture or by purchase are relegated to the background. In Hinduism there is the all-important mystic rite of taking the seven steps. The bridegroom and the bride begin the journey of life together, step by step. The bridegroom says: "Take one step with me, and I promise to feed you as long as you live; God is witness." "Take a second step with me," the boy says again, "and I promise to behave in such a way that your face shall always shine with inward health; God is witness." "Take a third step with me,

and I will give you wealth, prosperity, and the luxuries that can be bought with wealth; God is witness." "Take a fourth step with me; I will be answerable for your well-being; God is witness." "Take a fifth step with me; I will see that you have cattle; God is witness." "Take a sixth step with me; I promise to pay you my dues as your husband at the right season; God is witness." Then, finally, and beautifully he says: "With seven steps we have become companions. May I attain to friendship with thee. May I not be separated from thy friendship. Mayst thou not be separated from my friendship. Let us be united; let us always take counsel together with good hearts and mutual love. May we grow in strength and prosperity together. Now we are one in words, deeds, and desires. Thou art *Bhik*, I am *Sôviam*: I am the sky, thou art the earth; I am the seed, thou art the bearer; I am the mind, thou art the tongue. Follow me faithfully that we may have wealth and children together. Come, thou of sweet speech!" The bridegroom then offers sacrifice to the fire, repeating the following: "This girl has just passed her virginity. Make her leave her father's house. Bless her to remain fixed in her husband's house. May she have a good son by your blessing. Cause her to beget ten children, and I shall be the eleventh child. O Agni! bless her with children, and make them long lived. O Varuna! I pray to you for the same blessing. May this woman be free from the sorrow arising out of sterility, and be blessed by Garhapathyagne. May she have a number of children in her, and become the mother of many living children. O girl! May your home never know lamentations during nights caused by deaths. May you live long and happy with your husband and children! May the sky protect thy back; may Vayu strengthen your thighs, and the Arvins your breasts! May Savitri look after the suckling sons! Until the garment is put on, may Bhṛaspati guard them, and the Visva-devas afterwards. O Varuna! Make me strong and healthy. Do not steal away years from our ages." This rite is followed by the sacrifice to the sacred fire and by the ceremony of looking at the Arundhati or pole star, which symbolises constancy. Whilst both look at the pole star the bridegroom repeats: "Firm dwelling, firm origin, the firm one art thou, standing on the side of firmness. Thou art the

pillar of the state. These protect me against my adversaries." Then, turning to the bride, he says: "Thou art faithful; I regard thee as faithful; be thou faithful to me and to those whom I provide for. Brhaspati gave thee to me; gain children through me, your husband, and live for a hundred autumns." There follows also a ceremonial participation of food between husband and wife. At the taking of each morsel the bridegroom says: "I give you this morsel, and unite my life with yours; I unite my bones with your bones; I unite my flesh with your flesh; and I unite my skin with your skin." Thus ceremonies of a varied nature, some magical, with scarcely veiled hints of the sexual process; some economic, inculcating collaboration between the husband and the wife; some social, indicating the change of the system of relationships, are all blended together and over them is superimposed an almost mystic religious obligation of charity and mutual faithfulness. The social group is present throughout. Without the feasts, again, which subserve an important sociological function, the marriage is not acceptable to the community. It is in such ways that the association of religion with marriage has contributed to the integrity and solidarity of the joint family among the Hindus and to high ideals of purity and chastity in marital life.

DEATH, THE SUPREME TEST OF RELIGION.—There is another event which denotes the greatest crisis known to humanity, namely death. Among all primitive peoples death mobilises the whole community, which must gather and carry out certain religious obligations to the dead. Fear and sorrow, horror and disgust, which alternately possess the members of a bereaved community, are resolved in the ceremonial co-operation involved in the sacred mortuary rites. Rites such as cleansing and anointing the corpse, decking it in beautiful clothes, ornaments, or flowers express the tender emotions which the near ones of the departed must feel at this fateful moment. But religion chastens the love and sympathy for the dead. By prescribing a host of rites and ceremonies religion consoles the bereaved and conquers fear and horror. The presence of the whole community directly participating in some of the rites as a religious obligation also gives comfort. Lastly, there are rituals which directly inculcate the truths of immortality and the beauty,

order, and justice of the next world. Religion, by engendering hope in a future life, conquers the despair and perplexity which man must feel in the face of death. There is no more powerful impulse than that to live; there is no more ubiquitous religious belief than that of immortality. Death terminates adjustment in our lives, and hence is the most important occasion for religious rites. Man is faced with perplexities and despair in different phases of his existence; but, at this supreme crisis, his lack of adjustment is the most profound. Religion, therefore, which is spread over a man's life through a succession of events and experiences, must meet the challenge of death by rising to its most supreme and complex manifestation. For the most part, as the strength of the social bond is measured by the sympathy that death evokes as expressed in public mortuary rites and ceremonies, a religion is to be judged by its adjustment to death.

SOCIAL VALUE OF RELIGIOUS OCCASIONS.—The above crises of a man's life are among the most important occasions of religious observances, which enable man to adjust himself more readily to the crises they relate to. Such observances resolve the inner conflict between basic drives which beset man on these occasions. Wherever we see the birth of new interests or the satisfaction or denial from a given social situation of a variety of man's impulses and desires, we find such occasions celebrated with a religious rite. These arise, as we have seen, not merely in the course of changes which mark the instructive life of normal men and women, with birth, initiation, puberty, marriage, parentage, or death as their landmarks; but also in the procession of the seasons, characterized by contrasts of living conditions. Such, for instance, are the spring and autumn festivals, annual hunts and dairy festivals, sowing and harvest ceremonies which are cyclic in their recurrence. Social development has caused the major impulses of man to become essentially social, and these accordingly seek satisfaction in a social situation. Hence religious objects and values become essentially social values, and the events which most critically involve these social values become religious occasions. Thus as society develops a tradition and a memory, significant events of social and domestic life are linked with nature itself, and their commemoration becomes also seasonal and cyclic. In all these

we find religion subserving the purpose of an inner adjustment based on the instincts and the environment, and also on society's external relations, thereby bringing about stability in individual life and social organization. There is, therefore, an intimate connection between man's mental development and the occasions of religious celebration.

Further, with man's mental evolution there is a marked transformation of the rites and observances themselves. As social integration advances, there is an unconscious social modification of ideas and emotions and the individual expression of emotions is relegated to the background. In fact, custom and tradition, however inchoate and rudimentary in character, discipline the moods and emotions. Even among primitive peoples the participation of the group or the community in the tension, excitement, or crisis contributes towards the stabilization and organization of the emotions. Instead of violent gestures and outbursts we have a traditionally prescribed set of activities which re-shape birth, death, marriage, hunt, sowing, or other critical occasions. A dance, mimetic representation, or commemorative performance prepare the entire community for the next momentous event in tribal history and make easier the task of individual education and adjustments. Not merely are the emotions co-ordinated and rendered durable and the activities generalized and abstracted, but there are introduced into rites and observances conscious purposes and ideals in the form of myths and legends. Thus the rituals which subserve at first the function of releasing emotional tension or conflict are elaborated and repeated for their own sake, bringing with them not only the joy of rhythmical or harmonious action or movement, but also of emotional and intellectual integration. Through all this process rites and observances become more efficacious as forces of social control and guides of behaviour, enabling the individual to secure an effective adaptation, and the group its solidarity and unity of action, when these tasks become peculiarly difficult in the vital crises and momentous events of human existence. Finally, as man becomes critical and ratiocinative, he attempts to eliminate the Eros from the marriage ritual, the obscenity from initiation or the horrid and disgusting aspects from mortuary observances. Rationalization and

symbolical interpretation accompany a moral expurgation and evaluation of the old rites and observances. It may even be that these are shorn of their attendant emotions, which would mark the transition from the sway of tradition and wooden conventionalism to the abrogation of all old rites and observances characterized by strong emotional expression. With cultural progress there is a tendency to demand an intellectual type of satisfactions from rituals, and to depend upon science and the cultivation of aesthetic attitudes and social virtues and affections to control and orient the whole of social activity. Yet there cannot be any doubt that the conservative influences of religion, along with other means of social control, are immensely strengthened by the aid and co-operation of the special arts and ritualistic activities and exercises which provide a satisfying emotional experience of mutual responsiveness, the loss of which we all deplore in self-conscious societies.

CHAPTER V

RELIGION AND ECONOMIC LIFE

GODS OF THE ARTS AND CRAFTS.—Much of religion and the system of ethics are the outcome of man's way of life rather than of deliberate speculation. In ancient times man's life in an environment where natural phenomena, plants, and animals dominated his adjustment, his religious objects and beliefs showed the same general attitude towards them as characteristic of his daily pursuit. Man's culture is one living whole, and his economic ideas and religious beliefs interpenetrate. In an agricultural community religious life centres round earth and rainfall, season and crops. The craftsman worships his tools and appliances, and, since he himself creates things of iron, wood, and clay, he thinks religiously in terms of the Divine Artificer, who made man with His hands, and fashioned the course of nature. In India castes of artisans have their own special gods and goddesses. Besides, the practice of worshipping the instruments of one's calling is universal in India. The peasant worships his plough. Even a gleaner or a reaper is seen to bow before her sickle or hoe before she begins her work. The potter worships Siva, Krishna, or Prajapati on the chakri or wheel which in his mind is the emblem of reproduction; for when a marriage is celebrated in the village the potter's wheel is worshipped as a phallic symbol. Carpenters worship Viswakarma, their divine ancestor, who is represented by the wooden yard measure which they use in their daily work. Masons worship Viswakarma in their awl and hammer. Blacksmiths, too, worship their implements. The anvil represents Mahadeva and the anvil Devi. At the worship of the anvil they invite other blacksmiths on an auspicious day and then wash the anvil and offer before it what is called *agnya* by burning sweet-scented wood before it. This is done only when the anvil is first made, and the ceremony ends with a distribution of sweetmeats among the guests. Viswakarma is a widely accepted deity. Everywhere in India he is invoked to increase

the skill of craftsmen and the wealth of traders. On the occasions of the worship of Visvakarma the artisans besmear their tools with sandal and cover them with sweet-scented flowers and worship these as well. The Baniyas, who trade in spices, worship a goddess called Candloewari. All traders worship their books, pens, and inkstands, balance and weights. When new account books are opened, traders worship their pens, inkpots, and account books as emblems of business prosperity. The Kathaks or story-tellers worship the goddess Saraswati with offerings of sweetmeats, flowers, and incense. Saraswati is also devoutly worshipped by the student and even by the modern lover of the arts and the sciences. Some times an image of Saraswati is made; more often she is worshipped in books, pens, and inkstands. Even in modern hostels of residential universities her worship is not forgotten. It seems that the prevalence of her worship is due less to her position as a river goddess than to those attributes which she acquired as the patroness of the ceremonies performed on the banks of her holy waters, and subsequently as the inspirer of the hymns recited at these ceremonies. She is now known mainly as the goddess of speech and learning, the inventress of the Sanskrit language and patroness of all the arts and sciences.

WORK AND WORSHIP IN INDIA.—When tools and appliances serve as religious objects work and worship can intermingle. Man's economic activity may then arouse intense religious fervour. It is well known how the great Indian weaver and mystic, Kabir, gave utterance to highest religious thoughts whilst working on his loom, and several of his finest images and parables were derived from the processes of weaving. Throughout the East each industrial group has sought to represent itself, by associating religion with a man's occupation, as being continuous with the larger forces of the cosmos. Each artisan group or guild has its own gods or goddesses, its particular form or mode of aesthetic enjoyment, and each its economic tradition. And in its particular festivals ■ these diverse natural needs, religious, æsthetic, and economic, meet in the confluent outpouring of the communal soul. We thus see that a variety of impulses and interests is afforded fulfilment. The craftsmen handle tools which are symbols of both work and worship, and which therefore

arouse a variety of interests and satisfactions. The calling itself is regarded as a dedication. There is the superimposition of a religion upon the economic transaction. Thus the standard of craftsmanship is maintained as a religious duty. In the South Indian temple cubes this is simply recognised by enlisting the services of all artisans and craftsmen in some temple function or observance or another. The sphere of the artisan group is not merely economic, but extends to the concerns of worship, fasts, and festivals to the satisfaction of diverse functions and interests.

RELIGIOUS VALUE OF CRAFTSMANSHIP.—The Industrial Revolution in England, which was the outcome of the mechanical inventions of Hargreaves, Cartwright, and Watt, established the supremacy of the machine process by the middle of the nineteenth century. Since then the machine process has spread to Europe and America and is now freshly epidemic in the New Orient, where also it is gradually superseding handicraft production. Throughout the world there is not only a progressive mechanization of methods of industry, but also of ways and methods of living. Let us briefly consider the effects of the use of machines and mechanical appliances in production on the worker's attitudes and beliefs. The craftsman not merely determines what to produce but also when and how his tools act. Handicraft production satisfies many impulses. The hand-worker, being the master of his own tools and raw materials, can make his product as perfect as possible, gratifying his natural impulses of construction and self-display. Some of the masterpieces of art and craftsmanship have been created with little reference to utility for the mere pride and satisfaction of creation. The consumer appreciates the skill and toil of the craftsman; the craftsman also feels a genuine pleasure in rendering service to the appreciative consumer. Thus the labour involved blends or satisfies a variety of impulses and desires. It is a creation, and all creation engenders a religious attitude. Man feels that his own process is one with or akin to the course of nature. It is this attitude which underlies the worship of tools and appliances, as well as the representation of God as the Divine Craftsman who is at once the goal and the satisfaction of handicraftsmen in India.

MACHINERY SUPERVENES.—The Industrial Revolution transferred labour from man to mechanical appliances driven by power-generating machines. The machines are for the most part self-sufficient, and too large and complicated to be under the worker's control. Thus the worker not merely loses zest and initiative in his work, but also his own life must henceforth follow the rhythm of an impersonal and incomprehensible brute force—the machine. The machine knows neither excellence nor beauty. Both its method and standard of work are dictated by inanimate materials and inorganic forces. Man must adapt himself to these as far as he can in order that he may earn and live. The organic adaptation must be as close to mechanical standardization as possible, for the machine standardizes everything, tools and materials, process and product.

STANDARDIZATION AND ITS REACTIONS ON MAN.—The all-pervasive impersonal and mechanistic discipline of standardized mass production now dominates man's interest and attitudes. In the first place the processes of standardized production in one industry interlock with those in a large number of other industries. Hence the machine-process gradually absorbs all fields and kinds of labour. Secondly, the daily routine of the worker's life is standardized. The worker must fit his ideas, feelings, and behaviour into a cold impersonal mechanical rhythm which carries him along as a wisp of straw. Thirdly, a mechanistic universe is envisaged by the worker. What is uppermost in his mind is the race and intricate balance of mechanical appliances, raw materials, and organic processes, governed by the laws of physics and chemistry. It is the latter which, therefore, determines his attitude towards man and towards nature.

The all-embracing phenomena of standardization and mass movement are alien to man. They engender distrust and discontent and often strike terror into his heart. If the machine starves, hundreds and thousands of men which it has called into a coal town, an iron or steel town, a cotton town, a motor town, a soap town, or a shoe town will starve also, because the workers have learnt hardly anything else which can assure them a stable employment. The industrial world, as a whole, is so neatly balanced that perhaps the entire nation will suffer from wholesale unemployment and

starvation. On the other hand, there is no limit to the hunger of the machine. It derives its momentary supply of raw materials from Asia, Africa, South America, or Australia, and of labour from the countryside or from distant countries. The more abundant the supply of these the larger the scale of the industrial establishment, and the cheaper the product. Thus whole nations standardize themselves. They pride themselves as industrial peoples, specializing only in the production of goods, often luxuries, for foreign markets. The home workers may not consume these goods at all. They simply serve machinery and do not mind what they produce, luxurious cars or cheap tin kettles. Above all they hate farm work because they have learnt to live and move with the crowd, and rural life to them implies soul-killing isolation and stagnation. Food-production is to them the badge of the proletariat.

Nor can the modern worker overcome his maladaptation in this case by cultivating a religious attitude. Primitive man likewise was face to face with a hostile, incomprehensible environment. But he found comfort in animism and animatism, by which he established a close personal relationship with plants, animals, and natural phenomena, which then no longer disturbed him. The machine has banished zeal and interest from work. It satisfies only that group of impulses which gather round food-getting. Unlike the craftsman's tools and appliances, the machine is not an object towards which a harmonious blend of diverse impulses and desires, artistic, social, or religious, can be projected. The machine is simply iron and steel, which within the last two generations has come to govern, in a strange manner, man's impulses, body, and behaviour. But these latter emulate the former. The idea is abroad that the machine is a new gospel: and that to become traders of machines is the way of advance. Thus backward and unorganized peoples also adopt and serve machines, establish industries of their own, manufacture goods, however crude and unfinished these may be at the outset, and become less and less exploitable. Then a panic seizes the competing industrial nations which produce more goods than can be consumed at home, and find that the markets gradually become restricted. The machine, like man, seeks an equilibrium, but the equilibrium is never

reached. Being soulless, the adjustment it seeks is by mere increased size of body ; and as it grows it becomes stupendous, colossal, holding man more and more firmly within its iron jaws. The machine grows by its very extension destroys its own rhythm, and then there is a crash as of an earthquake, bringing down machines, men, and goods all together in terrible catastrophe. The mechanical domination appears, therefore, to man as irrational, memorable, and pitiless. Man, however, refuses to be standardized, or made a mere power or material in the specialized processes of mechanics and chemistry which he invented and adapted to serve him, not for him to serve. His feelings and desires, which the machines cannot satisfy, are now in open revolt. But a religion which can reconcile man and machinery is as yet below the horizon. Man's tools and implements are the extension of his limbs and organs. In modern industrial civilization the widespread use of machinery, utilizing vast resources of energy which Nature had so long hidden from us, has meant a disproportionate increase in the size and strength of our organism, the soul remaining too narrow and weak to wield or guide it. The function of religion in the machine-driven age would be to refashion man's soul and desires so that he can identify his cosmic self with humanity and the larger environment of the universe, vastly extended in size by science, and transcending space and time establish himself as the substance of the scheme of Nature and the matrix of Nature's processes.

MACHINERY IDENTICAL TO RELIGION.—Religion is an easy accretion to forms of behaviour which satisfy a coalescent group of impulses and feelings. The machine process thrives by standardization, which implies the canalization of behaviour along one definite channel. Both machine and mass production are, therefore, enemies of art and religion. They exaggerate one type of impulses and feelings ; and bring about a wooden uniformity of attitudes and interests. Standardization is now invading every sphere of life, and its invasion is marked by a corresponding lapse of the religious interest.

There are yet other ways in which the machine process is contributing to the lapse of the religious interest. In the régime of machinery, the methods in which men secure their livelihood have become manifold and indirect. Men do not

work directly for food. Their efforts are directed towards earning money rather than making the goods necessary to sustain life. Money can secure not only food, clothing, shelter, but also every luxury under the sun. As a consequence money becomes the agency for the fulfilment of various urges and desires. Man's desires for food, rest, human companionship, sex, aggression, etc., may all be satisfied through the possession of money. Accordingly, the quest for money has acquired a keenness never known before. Money has become the precondition of the pursuit of any values whatsoever. Poverty not merely implies hunger, it also thwarts sex, rest, and recreation; and poverty may come through no fault of the worker, but as a result of maladjustment of the intricate process in which the workers of distant countries partisepe. Money constitutes the background on which intrinsic and instrumental values largely rest. Indeed, money comes to be sought as the highest intrinsic value, and all other values are sacrificed in the pursuit. In an industrial civilisation the worth of man tends to be measured by his purchasing power. There are more commodities produced than the nation can consume; although the nation expects every man to do his duty, that is, to consume as much as possible. Man's standard of living is conceived for the most part in terms of the body. Physically man becomes richer and richer; the more money he can command the higher is his standard of living. Man's social status comes inevitably, therefore, to be governed by money. The belief also gains ground that higher values, which find expression through social service, art, or religion, and which money cannot buy, are inferior, or at any rate that they can be left until man secures a decent money income. Science degenerates into becoming the paid retainer of the profiteer. Even the science of psychology, which ought to unfold the infinite capacities and varieties of the human mind, is applied by the business man, in office and workshop, to the selection of employees, enticement of customers, the sale of goods to people who do not want them. The psychologist is hard at work perfecting the technique of exploitation, that he may hand it over to the employing class, for use in its interests as against those of the worker and the consumer. Art flourishes by addressing itself to the task of advertising business concerns. Even the philanthropic spirit of the benevolent

is enlisted by shrewd business men to keep the workers under control by means of social service agencies.

SOCIAL FAILURE OF MACHINERY.—When labour-saving machinery was first devised people dreamt of untold economic efficiency combined with abundant leisure for the masses. Economic efficiency exists in virtue of, and in subservience to, social efficiency, health, and welfare. Industrialism has involved in large measure a sacrifice of these social values. As regards leisure, man's work has become more intense and continuous than ever before. In agriculture and in handicrafts man works intermittently, and the interest in production is maintained by the system of direct production as well as by family collaboration. Strenuous work is succeeded by seasons of leisure or idleness enlivened in all non-industrial communities by a round of fairs, festivals, and festivities. In machine production, on the other hand, man works intensely day by day and year by year, and the sum total of his work every year is much greater than that which the agriculturist puts into the field or the craftsman into his handwork. Where the task of food-getting is so exacting, and standardised into a dull weary routine, the desire for higher satisfactions languishes. Above all, with most machine-tenders the grind of work furnishes the instincts, which therefore find play either in the craving for sports, recreation, and gambling, or in organic excesses, drink, or vice. Ross observes that the discipline, the monotony, and the meaninglessness of one fragment of a task, the dreary surroundings in industrial towns, make life more irksome than it has ever before been for free workers. The occupational series—hunter, herdsman, husbandman, craftsman, artisan—constitutes a curve away from the instinctive, which finds its terminus in the machine-tender with little in it to rouse the impulses of trial and error, curiosity or constructiveness. The numerous automatic machines which have been invented have taken the colour, the creative zest and novelty out of work and left it a husk, a dry, mechanical grind, a cut-and-dried function of physical drudgery without a soul. Where the day's work baffles elemental instincts and deserts man seeks recreation after exacting toil in coarse stimulation of the senses.¹ Jaded muscles and nerves seek relaxation in unmoderate pleasures,

¹ Ross, *Principles of Sociology*.

in morbid excitement, or in organs of sex and drink. A race of mechanical drudges always hunts after a thousand and one varieties of lurid pleasure and unwholesome excitement. A people can be judged as well, therefore, from its occupations as from its diversions and recreations. The machine process baffles elemental instincts in work, and a complete divorce between industry and art or religion is established as a result. Not merely in actual work, but even in the ordinary daily routine of life, standardization tends to drown all the impulses and energies along one narrow channel, denying satisfaction to many other impulses. The social environment on which the individual relies for guidance, as the animal does on his self-regarding organic functions, and which sums up the racial experience of the past, fails to respond to his need. Accordingly man alternates between the sphere of life dictated for him by his weekly routine and the life of appetites in which social and ideal values are altogether disregarded. The soul-killing standardization of the week-days is supposed to be mitigated by setting apart Sundays for the interests of the soul. But the mental reactions which follow the week's routine now and then tend to crowd out even the Sunday soul.

CHAPTER VI

BELIEF IN COSMIC ORDER

RELIGION OF THE PEASANT.—Through all the ages great religions have sprung from peasant-folk. The peasants, indeed, are the repository of a country's actual and ideal values. The mystic's vision is couched in the peasant's language. Agriculture allies itself with religion in every age or country. The contrast between the rural and urban attitude of mind is evident in types of religion and ritual adopted by rural and urban people. Throughout the world gradual industrialization has led everywhere to a lapse of living religion. Thus the problem of religion is inseparable from the change in ideas, images, and feelings which is to-day characteristic of the countryside. There is, on the one hand, a growing conviction that a religious revival can spring only from the outpouring of religious enthusiasm that now and then obsesses the country folk. On the other hand, the decline of religious feeling in the countryside is recognized as foreshadowing a universal atheism.

The peasant by reason of his occupation believes in a long scheme of things. He prepares the fields, sows seeds, nourishes the crops; but rain or drought sometimes baffles all his energies and starvation becomes the only reward of his patient waiting. He resigns himself to forces which surround his daily life and bread, but which he cannot clearly comprehend. He calls these forces God or Fate, and bows to them as withering crops bow before dry winds.

But agriculture is not wholly a mystery. The cultivator finds his reward in careful extermination of weeds, in manuring, ploughing, and irrigation. He accepts the inexorableness of God, Fate, or Nature's laws, but adapts the idea to the circumstances of his own life and labour on the farm. He solves in his own way the doctrine of free will and determination. In the *Mahabharata* we read that the reward of a man's actions depends upon both his own exertions and upon Fate, which is compared to the inherent

property of the soil. Soil fertility or barrenness, which fulfils or thwarts the farmer's wishes, represents the mysterious force which enters into daily life.

KARMA, THE UNIVERSAL LAW.—The peasant deals always with live things. His seeds are alive. The weeds which he uproots thrive when he neglects his work. The seedlings grow into crops, and then they require his constant care and nourishment. The crops grow day by day by inches under his very eyes. Pests or insects injure and kill them, as they also do human beings. Drought burns them or a bleak gale benumbs them; the animals of the farmyard are similarly afflicted by the same evil agencies. Above all the peasant's life and work follow the rhythm of the seasons. Both seasons and crops are cyclical in their recurrence. Agricultural seasons, particularly in a monsoon region, are sharply divided. Thus one cycle of labour and fruition follows another, and the succession is eternal, like the procession of summer, autumn, winter, and spring. In all these the peasant faces the mystery of life and of reproduction, and utters his conviction thus :—

"At his bidding, it riseth here :
It riseth on the fields of life !
It riseth on the fields below !
My hand is on the plough (the Truth), the seeds are in my hands :
The seeds of God's Name I sow.
My eyes are raised and look above : then look they down and I sow.
The crops grow, the crops grow !
He is now mine !
The sweetest !"

The peasant combines his belief in the inviolability of the law of the soil, of God, and of Fate with the mystery of sequence in nature, plant, animal, or man. This has given to the Hindu the law of *Karma*, which is a doctrine and code of ethics. Briefly and crudely put, it states that a man's reward follows from the good or evil he has reaped from past births. Those whose conduct has been pleasing will quickly attain a pleasing birth, birth as a Brahmin, or a Kshatriya, or a Vaishya; but those whose conduct has been abominable will quickly attain an abominable birth, birth as a dog, or a hog, or an outcast. The word for action, *Karma*, denotes the mysterious power which causes all deeds, whether good or evil, to work themselves out in requital in other lives. No

living being, god, demon, animal, or plant violates the law of *Karma*. The doctrine is universally accepted in India, and Buddhism spread it to the major part of Asia.

KARMA AND BIOLOGY.—Every religion in India seeks as its object the release of the individual from the doom of repeated births and deaths. This is the ideal of individual salvation or freedom. But in the background the dominating beliefs of *Karma* and transmigration govern his conduct. The ethical and sociological significance of the law of *Karma* is not far to seek. It is a biological conception in so far as it recognizes that the mingled good and evil of body and mind which a man inherits represent the limiting conditions of his achievement. The organism cannot frustrate its inheritance. Again, the organism maintains its individuality through a succession of generations. But the organism does not live an isolated, specific existence. Biology envisages for us a complex "web of life". There are threads of actions and interactions between plants, animals, and between beings which science now is slowly comprehending. Life, therefore, is one, though it has its ascending and descending levels. It is a constantly becoming Something which runs through an interminable chain of sequence, manifesting itself as plant or animal. Thus the Hindu view that Life is one, and that it is always a process of becoming as it assumes myriad forms, is true to science. In Buddhism, in particular, the conception deepened and broadened. Buddhist art expressed the very breath of Nature's sentient life in its reproduction of an exuberant variety of plant and animal forms in sculpture and painting, while the philosophical system presented a synoptic view of man's destiny and fortunes in the great Wheel of Life.

KARMA A WAY OF SALVATION.—But the doctrine of *Karma* is not only an evolutionary idea, it pictures an ethical and spiritual ideal. Bad deeds can be compensated for only by good deeds. Man in every sphere or occupation must realize the seriousness of life and his personal responsibility. He is a part of a cosmic system where every act, however insignificant, leaves a reaction behind. In the *Jataka*s we find that the Buddha was gradually prepared for his enlightenment in his previous births, in each of which he performed a supreme act of self-sacrifice. In Mahayana Buddhism every householder was expected, in order that he might obtain real

release, to acquire the perfection and maintenance of the Buddhas. Though the upward struggle would take an incalculable number of ages, the goal was within the reach of every human being. Each person, man or woman, was, therefore, exhorted to take at once the vow to become a Buddha; and the assurance was given that the power of that vow was sufficient to bear them through the innumerable births and serious sufferings which lay before them. If they began a life of active benevolence, and sought to rouse within themselves the desire to save all creatures, they would pass through the ten stages (*bhūmis*) of the career. Since the end was certain, each person who took the vow at once became a *Bodhisattva*—one destined to become a Buddha. Life must select the experiences of the past and transmit them into the future. There is no "clean slate" anywhere. The mingled good and evil of the past generation are written on the slate of the present. It devolves upon the present generation to erase such old marks and write new ones that may bring life nearer to the ideal picture. By the side of the Wheel of Life Buddhists set the Wheel of Righteousness, representing at once the culmination and triumph of the procession of nature.

KARMA, A UNIFYING DOCTRINE.—Science has thriven in the West by disconnected specialisations. There has long been a recognition of the antithesis between the ethical and the cosmic process—the antithesis so vividly exhibited before the last generation of biologists by Huxley in his celebrated *Romanes Lecture on Evolution and Ethics*. Religion is essentially a synthetic, comprehending activity of the mind. Thus the doctrine of *Karma*, as fashioned by the practical religion of the Hindu and the Buddhist, establishes a cosmic moral order itself instead of superimposing upon the human world the working of Divine Justice or the fiat of the Sovereign Ruler of the Universe. So concerned, it holds together life and mind, the present and the past, good and evil, the cosmic and ethical process in an integrated, harmonious whole. To-day this doctrine, which represents an enduring contribution of practical rustic speculation to religion, and which has its roots in man's adjustment to the sequence of agriculture and the cycle of the seasons, still suffices for India, Ceylon, Burma, Tibet, Mongolia, and China; and,

therefore, for the larger portion of the human race. It has harmonised the belief in a long scheme of things, necessary in an agricultural civilisation, with the initiative and freedom necessary for spiritual enlightenment of the individual.

KARMA, A COSMIC POWER OF RIGHTOUSNESS.—The concept of a blind, irresistible destiny, which overwhelms everything and everybody, has arisen among different ages and peoples. This has its roots in an inner co-ordination which resolves man's conflict of elemental urges, frustrated, often as they are, by circumstances over which he has no control. A just or righteous world thus takes the place of one which is a prey to any fortuitous course of circumstances. The Greeks and the Romans conceived Fate in god-like wise, as *Mourai*, *Parcae*, *Ananke* ("necessity"), essentially a compulsory force before which even gods were helpless. In India Fate was conceived in different ways. Sometimes it is decreed by the gods, sometimes it appears as personified Time or as blind Necessity, and often as the inevitable outcome of a man's deeds in previous births. The Buddhist *Jainas* declare: "Luck rests not in gem or wonder-stick, but in one's own energy and deeds in this life and in preceding lives; it is, in fact, the outward expression of stored-up merit." Thus the ethical value of the *Karma* doctrine in popular as well as in philosophical religion cannot be exaggerated.¹ It teaches that there is no such thing as a cruel Fate or an unjust God, that it is foolish to rail at misfortune as if it were undeserved, or to expect a better fate hereafter if one is not morally prepared for it. *Karma* takes, as it were, the place of a just, logical, irresistible divine power. It rewards virtue and punishes vice (mental and bodily) both for men and gods with the unerring "fruit of the deed". It is apparently a blind mechanical force, yet it is intrinsically ethical. All its rewards are for the good, all its punishments are for the wicked. It represents a cosmic power of righteousness for ever working through encouragement of virtue towards a high ethical goal. The Eastern religions thus worked out a relationship of man's past, present, and future, in terms of Nature's eternal procession, and gave a law of serenity for the individual, which was at once sociological and natural. There is no doubt that this religious belief, which has come from the

¹ See *Shankar, Origin and Evolution of Religion*.

observation of the silent cycles of vegetative growth, solves a good many of man's doubts and enigmas. Among millions of men in Asia, it has given a natural quietude, dignity, and reserve, which are deliberately striven after by other peoples.

KARMA IN BUDDHISM AND JAINISM: BUDDHIST WAY OF ESCAPE.—There is no trace of sentiment when the Eastern religions discuss man and his destiny. A deed has been performed, and its result either good or bad must follow. This result must cleave to the individual. The law of moral justice is disregarded if one sows and another reaps. We read in the *Samyutta Nikaya*.—

"According to the seed that's sown,
So is the fruit ye reap therefore:
Doer of good will gather good:
Doer of evil evil reaps
Sown is the seed and thou shalt taste
The fruit thereof."

The above law is as inevitable as the law of gravitation or the way of the sun. We are also told elsewhere: "Neither in the kingdom of air, nor in the depths of the sea, nor even if thou dive into the recesses of mountains, shalt thou find anywhere on earth a state where thou may'st escape the fruit of thine actions." According to the Buddhist doctrine, when the organs of a man's body are being formed or are developing, the influence of what we term heredity is superimposed upon the process. This is the influence of Karma, the maturing influence (*vipāka*) of moral antecedents. The mutual relation between natural growth and heredity is illustrated by the simile that the first process constitutes the "vanguard" or a rampart under the protection of which the second, *vipāka*, may safely operate. Karma, says Stcherbatsky, is not quite physical with the Buddhists, as it is with the Jains, but it seems to be semi-physical, since it interferes in the disposition of actions along with the principle of growth that accumulates.¹ In the Jain doctrine Karma is regarded as physical matter which mingles with the particles (*pradesas*) of the soul due to the latter's character and tendency. The vicious relentless vigilance of matter to run to and embrace the soul in its ignorance and infatuation as much as in its enlightenment and discrimination, is called *Atreva* in

¹ Stcherbatsky, *The Central Conception of Buddhism*, p. 22.

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Jainism.¹ Nothing is lost, everything is followed by its due effect, i.e. is punished or rewarded. Thus the endless links of deeds weave the chain of *Samsara*. But *Karma* proclaims responsibility and emphasizes effort.

"Beings," says the Buddha, "are owners of their karmas, heirs of their karmas; their karmas are their masters; their karmas are their lineage, and by their karmas are they established." Again, the Buddha admonishes his only son thus: "Is there a deed, Rahula, thou dost wish to do, then bethink thee thus: Is this conducive to my own harm, or to other's harm, or to that of both, then is this a bad deed entailing suffering. Such a deed must thou surely not do."

All sorrows and afflictions are outstanding debts accruing from misdeeds either in the past or in the present life. All misdeeds of the present similarly lengthen the chain of sorrows and afflictions in the future. Neither man nor the Buddha, nor God, can suspend the law. Thus does cosmic law or justice work itself out, and man's life, with its joy or sorrow, following his good or evil deeds of the past, is but a wisp of straw carried on by the irresistible river of *Karma* flowing from birth to birth to the ocean of Time. Yet man can rise against this current, and assert himself. Man, by dissolving the ego thought in true knowledge, can deliver himself from good and evil and stand beyond and above both. Through the extinction of feeling and will man ceases to be led by the *Karma* from life to life, from sorrow to sorrow, and he can say:—

"This *Karma*, that chains me to painful life, can frighten me no more. I have stared its face as a little child fears its reflection in the looking-glass, unwitting that it is its own face that it looks upon. I not only am the product of this *Karma*, but I am also its creator. It can be abolished by my own will, and nothing is needed but the removal of that illusion which pictures the I as a substantial being."

The sins of fathers here are not visited on their children. No God here releases man from the fetters of *Samsara* by Divine Grace. The individual's own will by destroying itself secures the release.

"As sorrow is nothing but the law of mortality as applied to the individuality, and as worked out by the individuality, so also *Karma* is nothing else but the law of the conservation of

¹ *Jain, Outline of Jainism*, p. 111.

energy as applied to the individuality, and as worked out by the individuality. As something founded on individuality, with the fall of individuality it also falls."¹

MAN'S MULTIPLE BEING.—Modern science has come to recognize that man's individuality undoubtedly represents the action of past lives on present ones. According to G. W. Holford, that the human individual is polyphysic, that an indefinite number of streams of consciousness co-exist in each of us which can be variously and in varying degrees associated or dissociated, is now a doctrine widely accepted even by "orthodox psychology".² Coomaraswamy quotes Lafcadio Hearn who expresses the same thought more Buddhistically,—

"For what is our individuality? Most certainly it is not individuality at all, it is multiplicity inseparable. What is the human body? A form built up out of billions of living entities, an unperceivable aggregation of individuals called cells. And the human soul? A composite of quadrillions of souls. We are, each and all, infinite composites of fragments of anterior lives. In the *Parinirvana*: 'A congeries dissolved, tearing with many purposes and places, and yet in whom there is no power to perish.'"

SURVIVAL THEORIES.—NIRVANA.—Interwoven with the above strand of thought is the idea that a continuity of cause and effect is maintained as between past, present, and future lives. Buddhism does not mention the theory of the "subtle body", but takes the above idea for granted. The Brahmanical schools, however, postulate an astral or subtle body, the *Linga Sarira*, a material complex, not the *Atman*, serving as the invisible carrier of both personal identity as well as moral destiny, and not disintegrated with the death of the physical body. The question of the survival of personality after death has aroused scientific attention, and there is some evidence which denotes that a man's individuality persists after death in some form or other. If this view be correct, man must reap the results of his deeds through a series of births and deaths, and his individuality "looks before and after". In Buddhism, when the individual attains his *Nirvana* he ceases to look before and after, because no more does he look at the world. No more Nature looks at him. "He has blinded Nature, utterly extirpated her eye; he has disappeared from that evil eye."

¹ Dublin, *Buddhist Range*, p. 128.

² *Philosophical Journal*, No. 43.

KARMA MODIFIED BY GRACE.—The *Karma* doctrine, with its rigidity and inviolability, as well as its emphasis of the activities of social life, has long been an obstacle to the impatient mystic. Thus the doctrine of grace gradually came to be interwoven with this from dawn ages of antiquity. In the *Upanishads* we read: "God is not to be obtained by instruction, nor by much learning. He is to be obtained only by the one whom He chooses; to such a one He reveals His own person." It is, however, in the *Bhagavad Gita* that the theory of grace has found a supreme expression. The Lord declares: "Come to me as your sole refuge; I will release you from all sins." The ascetic shuns work lest work enslave him. The ritualist works in the hope of reward, which again intensifies his separateness. In the religion of Krishna, there is no fear of bondage, which an assiduous adherence to the daily round of domestic and social duties involves. For Krishna says: "Do all thy work for me, and abandon all fruit of work in devotion to me." If every act is done for God's sake, life itself becomes true worship. As Buddhism emphasized the annihilation of will and consciousness as the way to obtain release from the world process, so the Brahmanical schools emphasize that release can be obtained by the annihilation of one's self as an independently active individuality, and by the realization that it is the god of the whole, the *Virwa*, or the world that is sought through the individual. It is for this reason that at the end of each Brahmanical sacrifice, ritual, or worship, the individual offers a prayer which dedicates the accompanying merit and directs it to God. The age-long educated Hindu view is that the *Karma* a man obtains as his social legacy is the work he ought to do, because there is a moral necessity to do it as a service to divinity, and because, if done in a spirit of absolute renunciation, it illumines him with the divine light of peace and knowledge. Such a view illustrates the Hindu comprehension into one whole of life and mind, morality and religion, and a corresponding practical co-ordination of sociological, ethical, and religious aims in the daily routine of life.

RELEASE FROM KARMA.—In the field of Indian theism the doctrine of *Karma* is, indeed, never accepted in its entirety, but there is emphasis of man's dependence on God and

his supplication for the Divine Mercy or the Divine Grace, which alone can assure release. Mere austerity, penance, or good deed is of no avail. Throughout the history of Indian religions knowledge, love, or action has been in turn emphasized as the sole means of salvation, and the doctrine of Karma has been modified by the philosophy of each school. As the Vaishnava and Sarna schools sprang up there were attempts made to reconcile the omnipotence and initiative of God with the law of Karma, and such attempts were similar in their nature to the scholastic disputes regarding freedom and predestination, the intellect and the will of God, in medieval Europe.¹ Popular devotional mysticism in India rears itself on the belief that unless God's compassion is aroused no good deeds can be of any avail. On the other hand, higher religious mysticism has emphasized that everything is God, that finitude is not altogether an illusion, and that the many is a tangible form of the One. Hence to serve the many is really to serve the One which is invisibly present in it. Hence it is by self-knowledge from which there springs a sobriety and service for the good of the creation as a whole that freedom from Karma and immortality can be obtained. When one merges himself in the many to the total extinction of individuality neither sorrow nor Karma can chain him any more. In Buddhism the individual is released from Karma when he renounces his ego-consciousness. When the ego no longer exists, there is no more Karma, no more world for the individual. In Mahayana Buddhism, the Bodhisattva refuses to enter Nirvana until all sentient creatures can find their release from Karma. It is by identification of the Bodhisattva's ego with that of his neighbour that the fetter of Karma and the sorrow of all beings are destroyed. The Bodhisattva thus does not shrink from experience, for "just as the lotus flowers do not grow on the dry land, but spring from the dark and watery mud, so is it with the Heart of Wisdom: it is by virtue of passion and sin that the seeds and sprouts of Buddhahood are able to grow and not from inaction and eternal annihilation."² Therefore Nirvana in Mahayana Buddhism is positive; it is the realization of

¹ See Haridas Bhattacharya, *The Doctrine of Karma, Collected Essays*, October, 1925.

² *Vinaya-Kuti Sutra*, quoted in Comarow's *Buddha and the Gospel of Buddha*, p. 266.

infinite love and infinite wisdom, where knowledge and love alike proclaim identity. It is this alone which can assure peace and freedom of all beings from *Karma*. The same conviction, that identity must be proclaimed both by infinite knowledge and infinite love, and that peace is not for one but for the many, receives noble expression in the universal prayer of orthodox Hinduism—a prayer not merely for all fellow-men, but also for all sentient creatures, even for earth, water, and heaven, in fact for the cosmos as a whole :—

“Peace be unto the heaven. Peace be unto the upper ether
Peace be unto the earth. Peace be unto water. Peace be unto herbs.
Peace be unto great trees. Peace be unto the God of the Universe.
Peace be unto Brahma. Peace be unto all. Peace be unto Peace
Itself.”

CHAPTER VII

SYMBOLS OF RELIGION

RATIONALISM OR SYMBOLISM.—Man creates an ideal world over and above the natural. He constantly creates images and symbols from which he derives as much satisfaction as he obtains from physical objects. Symbolisation represents the process of substituting relatively simple and concrete images for those which are complex and abstract. Every symbol which grows and lives in the individual or the race satisfies and stabilises a complex group of ideas, impulses, and interests. It, therefore, subserves a more effective and satisfactory adaptation to environment and is hence in keeping with a harmonious development of the personality. This is the reason why symbols are created in every country and among every people. Symbols also grow and decay. With the shifting of the intricate balance of interests, old and venerable symbols are given up or retained in altered forms. New creeds have sprung up on the basis of an interpretation of religious symbols, while wars of religions and of races have been fought in the names of conflicting symbols like the Cross and the Crescent, the *Trisula* and Trident.

Since a man's ideas and images are moulded in the crucible of his social consciousness, it is inevitable that images and symbols must vary amongst countries and peoples. Social inheritance determines both the nature and process of symbolisation. Yet, as in all fields of human expression, though the language of symbols differs, the reality behind them is often one and the same, organising as it does similar groups of normal human drives. A recognition of this aspect, which must come with a closer study of the affective and conational processes involved in symbolisation, will banish religious intolerance and prejudice and contribute to a proper estimate of the most profound religious truths and experiences of different peoples.

Even in the same culture a great motif in religion becomes different to different men; to different men it satisfies

different acts of impulses and interests. Yet, though the symbol would be differently interpreted by each, there need not be any cause of religious schism or conflict; because for each, according to the level of his consciousness, it provides a means of adaptation to the environment, solves an inner conflict, and thus helps towards the development of the personality.

As some art devoid of the trammels of local technique and historical consciousness easily appeals to humanity all over the world, so there are great religious symbols which, freed from their context, represent profound truths that have value for every man, irrespective of race and tradition. The value of a religion is to be judged by the contribution it makes through such cosmic symbols to the sum total of man's religious experience.

HINDU CONCEPTION OF SYMBOLISM.—Nowhere has the process of symbolisation been so exuberant as in Hinduism; nowhere have its limits been more clearly demarcated by philosophical means than here. The moot question is thus asked in the *Uttara Gita* :—

"There can be no distinction of what is not visible. The visible, again, perishes. How can attention be fixed upon the formless God? The conditioned personal form is open to the objection of transiency, the unconditioned impersonal form, again, is open to the objection of blankness. If, then, both are objectionable, how is attention to be concentrated on God?" (*Uttara Gita*, 1-14.)

The Sanskrit word for meditation means "creating" or "causing to be", and shows the real nature and value of the symbolisation process. The seeker after God projects his feelings and interests to His symbol, to the names which he gives to Him, to the various art-motifs, flowers, and geometrical designs which he associates with Him as a part of religious tradition. It is in this manner that the Unknowable makes itself manifest, "even as the cow's milk which pervades the cow's whole system comes out only through her teats."

Thus in reality the controversy as between philosophical monism and dualism is resolved in the religious consciousness. As the *Bodhisattva* puts it: "One claims worship God saying 'I am thou'; the other worship Him saying 'I am not different from thee'." Though there is some difference the result ultimately is the same. The same idea is also expressed

in the *Kularnava Tantra*, where God says: "Sower seek me as the Universal One, others seek me as the Perfect Being. Both are ignorant of my Reality, which is devoid of either personal or impersonal character" (*Kularnava Tantra*, 5-1-110).

As regards the symbol itself a wide latitude is given. Vyasa remarks somewhere: "Whatever may be the object of one's liking, let him meditate upon that. If the mind settles upon that particular object it may settle also elsewhere." Similarly we read in Adinatha's *Parasarthasara* that God is of all forms. In whatever form God is worshipped He assumes it as the substratum of mind itself. But this does not imply that the religious man should accept anything but a divine symbol, i.e. a form in which the divinity is particularly pleasing to him. Indeed, the drives of men are so different that there are a thousand and one varieties of symbols by which the Hindu seeks to fill his mind with the thought of God. Yet there is the unequivocal promise held out by the Lord: "In the manner in which men seek and serve Me, so do I seek and serve men."

SYMBOLISING GOD.—Philosophically man envisages God as the Supreme Being, Spirit or Soul, but as a gregarious animal, as man is, he always craves fellowship with God. God, in order to be a stable religious object, must satisfy normal human impulses. In the course of an age-long evolutionary process the social nature of man has been the chief factor in his selection and survival. It has its roots deep in a primary herd-instinct, derived from man's animal apprenticeship in trees and meadows. It has been modified and transfigured by a variety of social groups and institutions which man has built up to satisfy this elemental drive. For this reason also man seeks God not as mere abstraction in the cold dry light of reason and knowledge, but as a friend and companion, as father and mother, and even in the tenderest man-woman relation. We read in the *Śruti*: "Man seeks a perfect friend, father, or mother in that Being by whose ordination he is made more or less to depend on such relationships." Or, again, we read in the *Bhagavad Gita*: "God is the Father, Mother, and Creator of the World." The search for God through impulses and desires is an inevitable inner adjustment, and it is as old as the history

of man himself. The primitive man sought to establish a close blood relationship with mountains and rivers, with animal guardian spirits and totems. The mystic through all the ages has sought communion with God, and experienced most tender joys and sorrows in his relationship with Him. It is the eternal hunger for companionship which Gilbert Murray thinks underlies the Stone conception of the Friend,

"We are gregarious animals," he says, "our ancestors have been such for countless ages. We cannot help looking out on the world as gregarious animals do; we see it in terms of humanity and fellowship . . . And it may be, it may very possibly be, that, in the matter of this Friend behind phenomena, our own yearning and our almost ineradicable insatiable conviction, since they are certainly not founded on either reason or observation, are in origin the groping of a lonely-wounded gregarious animal to find its herd or its herd-leader in the great spaces between the stars."

VALUE OF THE GOD SYMBOL.—The Hebrew scriptures say that God made man in his own image. The history of Eastern religions shows that man has created God also in his own image. But this tendency must not be labelled as anthropomorphism, polytheism, or henotheism, and dismissed as incompatible with the worship of God in Spirit and in Truth. For in truth it represents a process of symbolization which brings about a communion with Personal God through one's normal impulses and desires. It is only through the motor processes in relation to the symbol that God's living presence is established.

PSYCHOLOGISTS ON SYMBOLISM.—THE CROSS.—The process of symbolization has assumed importance in contemporary psychological literature. Jung regards a symbol as an expression for that of which no rational account can be given at the time when the symbol possesses its highest value. It is thus an indication of the future, of the general direction which life, individual or social, must follow. At a later date, or for a generation for whom a certain symbol has ceased to be vital, it may be possible to find another expression; as, for example, an intelligible account of what the symbol originally implied or indicated. But, in so far as any kind of additional expression becomes possible, it means that the symbol has already born to that extent devitalized. According to Jung, the way in which St. Paul and the early mystical speculators handle the symbol of the Cross shows that for

them it was a living symbol which represented the inexpressible in an unsurpassable way.¹ A recent writer regards the symbol as something placed over against the conscious standpoint. Or, rather, the image, or the phantasy, in all the fullness of its emotional resonance and with all the apparent thought content through which it may have been elaborated, becomes a symbol through the adoption by consciousness of a definite attitude towards it. Through the symbol, or *vis-à-vis* the symbol, the conscious being commits himself of his own choice to a certain course of conduct, life, or experience. He does not, and cannot, fully know where he is being led; though knowledge may grow from more to more as he makes good each step of the way. As he advances the symbol will change, or the imagery involved will change. The conception here is teleological in so far as the enrichment of life, or the moral individuality, is gained and secured. It is a teleology in which purpose is, at the most, implicit in so far as no intellectual formulation of aim is, or can be, achieved. The term, purpose, is in effect misleading. For, at a later stage, what becomes explicit is not so much purpose or aim as realized value.²

HINDU APPROACH TO GOD THROUGH THE SYMBOL.—In the Hindu system of worship man finds a symbol of the incarnation of the divinity not a dead symbol, a shadow; but a symbol which by thought can be conjured up into the Divinity itself. From the very outset he is enjoined to fill his mind with the thought that he and the divinity are one and the same. Several practices are commended to effect one's gradual release from the immediate sensori-motor experience and feeling. By degrees the mind is withdrawn from other ideas and feelings, and is concentrated on the divine symbol. Thought then intervenes and discriminates mind and symbol, and yet in this process establishes a closer and closer union of the two. This process is carried on to the utmost extent possible until the relation of worshiper and divinity, mind and symbol, is transcended. The World-body of the Divinity is then seen beyond the limits of space and time, and yet interpenetrating all objects and experiences, all the processes of nature and history, and man's own ideas, and imagines.

¹ *Psychological Types*, p. 202.

² J. M. Thurman, *Art and the Unconscious*, pp. 76-8.

Such experiences transcend space and time, and bring with them an effacement of the feeling of finite individuality. Divinity is realized as a process of development, in which we have parallel processes of individuation and assimilation. Personality progresses as man, in one breath, scatters himself to the world around him, and in another breath also gathers it in himself, identifying himself with the aims and aspirations of all.

A vivid religious experience like the above is recorded for us in the *Bhagavad Gita*. When God assumed His Universe body He became too terrible for man :—

"With mouths, eyes, ears, breasts multitudes,
I see Thee everywhere, unbounded Form,
Beginning, middle, end, nor source of Thee,
Infinite Lord, Infinite Form, I find.

On every side, all-swallowing, fiery-tongued,
Thou lookest up mankind, devouring all.
Thy glory fills the space : the Universe
Is burning. God, with Thy blessing eyes "

But man prayed to God to present Himself in "His human shape." The normal image of God is the human image. When man finds God as a human companion he finds greater peace and happiness. Thus, when God showed to man His own familiar shape, men rejoiced :—

"Beholding thus Thy gentle form,
Thy human shape, O God !
I am collected once again,
And have become myself "

Similarly the *Satit Gita* gives the following description of the Universe body of the Divine Mother :—

"O Mother of the Worlds ! Thou splendest out in perfection this beginningless and endless creation ; together with the sportive beauty and adornment, characterized by the sentiment of Love, whose manifestation contains the flowing tide of the ebullience of joy.

"By a mere glance of Thine eye, O Mother ! our sportive appearances, through the Lord, and so do there arise, O Goddess ! I think, sportive appearances of multitudes of solar systems of various sorts and in infinite numbers.

"The work of Creation, its continuance and its re-absorption, is a mere wave of Thy sportive pleasure. Thou art able to create the whole in a moment. A salutation to Thee, therefore, O Infinite Energy ! "

And yet the Mother, who pervades everything in the

Universe, assumes a dual form in the human relationship of man and woman :—

"Higher than the High, possessing a form by the highest principle, These opposite glimmers, for creating all the principles of creation ; and again, through the ended work of Their existence and consequences, These personally dost manifest a dual form in the relation of the husband and the wife."

The Formless Divinity embodies itself in the human image in man or woman, in the relation between man and man and between man and woman. Human relationship is but a manifestation of Divinity. Yet Divinity transcends it. It is in and through real religious experience, which is an all-inclusive experience, that man can realise at once that the Perfect Being or God is he himself, and that all his activities and relationships are extensions of this Perfect Being within the limits of space and time.

INFINITE NATURE OF THE SYMBOLISING PROCESS.—There is, accordingly, a continuous dual process of the fashioning of Reality in human symbols, and a converse activity of emptying the symbols and the subconsciousness in order to reach the Reality. The images of God arrived at by this dual process are both real and symbolical, and the prescribed actions, signs, and postures elicit feeling and attitude, which constitute worship. Such images, when they remain constant, become abstract and partial and fail to satisfy the totality of human desires and aspirations. The rituals and observances in this case lose their meaning and fail to create and renew religious emotion. The mystic religious, on the other hand, renews the symbols, and his rites or actions, which symbolise beliefs and values, draw fully his subconscious and represent the fullness of his personality. The mystical mind, as it creates a procession of symbols day by day, gradually leads itself beyond its own habitual properties, beyond all symbols or exaltations of the subconscious, beyond all relativities to the Reality. All through there is the incessant activity of the interpretation of symbols under the full light of consciousness, and the process is infinite. The significance of interpretation in the field of mystical consciousness can hardly be exaggerated. Thus, Professor Royce's definition of interpretation as a method of knowledge taking its place beside perception and conception as a third type, is full of promise.

The symbol is moulded by human impulses in a human pattern. Through the interpretative process it again and again empties itself to return to glory again and again as the risen Divinity. In Buddhism the Absolute is termed *Dharmakaya* or "the body of Law", but the Absolute reveals himself by a process of self-emptying in the Buddha or Buddhas. Similarly, in Christianity the God embodies Himself by a process of self-emptying in Christ. As Buddhism also conceived of a *Sambhoga-kaya* or glorified body of bliss in which, after a sacrificial life, the blessed one was reinstated in glory, so did Christianity conceive of the Lord returning to glory as the risen Christ. In Hindu worship the idea of the Formless as manifesting itself in aspects of Form, and again merging in the Formless is universal. In a famous popular song sung throughout Northern India, we find this idea expressed with great sincerity:—

"How many thousands of the creators of the world are born and reborn from Thee and do ead return in Thee,
O Eternal Person without end or beginning!—just as the waves rise from and settle down in the ocean."

Nothing illustrates better than this passage the infinite character of the symbolising process, its original, effortless, and unyielding perception of the Reality.

In the *Martandya Chandi*, which is read like the Bible in every home in Bengal, we learn that the body of the Divine Mother is fashioned by the consensus of minds of the various gods who sought her protection. From this body issue forth a thousand forms in kaleidoscopic succession to meet the various tribulations of the gods in the hands of the demons. The whole symbolism of the war of the Divine Mother against the forces of evil represents the conquering march of the soul which has declared war against impulses and desires. Each step of advance is marked by the creation of a fresh symbol which, when it has outgrown its use, empties itself to create another; and the procession of symbols which seek to free man's mind from all egotisms and relativities never ends. We are left with a prophetic vision of resurrection, a messianic hope: "Whenever and wherever the forces of evil emerge and stand in the way of the good, there and then I shall incarnate Myself to fight them."

GOD REVEALED THROUGH SYMBOLS.—Human symbols

transform God from a metaphysical abstraction to a physical presence. They are not finite and uncertainly reliable, because a mystical life implies that they are constantly reinterpreted and reoriented to consciousness. It is through contemplation that the psychological dependency of the symbols themselves is persistently overcome. The mystical mind in its search for a metaphysical knowledge of reality constantly empties the symbols or betaken itself to new symbols; and these sometimes transcend the world of space and time, sometimes enshroud it as a veil, sometimes work themselves out through the processes of nature and history: but again and again they come in human patterns in order that man may live and commune with the Reality as he lives and communes with his fellow-men. For man's mental constitution has so decreed that he attains a perfect knowledge when his impulses and feelings also are deeply stirred.

CHAPTER VIII

SOCIAL CONCEPTION OF RELIGION

RELIGION AS SOCIAL BOND.—Man's gregariousness has always made fellow-men the subject of his greatest interest. It is the human group to which a man belongs which has evoked sacrifices and sufferings. The reason is that society is the precondition of the satisfaction of all values, constituting the base on which all groups and values arise. Any danger to the community invests it with the higher intrinsic value, so that all other groups and values may be sacrificed, for the time being, to save it. Through all the early stages of man's social evolution, religious objects and gods have been rooted in the social needs and aspirations of the community. The plant or animal totem, the animal guardian spirit, or the ancestor of the tribe represents a common object of worship of the social group, and it is primarily in kinship relation to this object that the group develops its cohesiveness. The guardian-deities of the village installed under the shade of the banyan-tree, or, again, the serpent representing the zig-zag course of village boundaries, receive worship from the village community and serve as its cementing bond. Even the banyan-tree itself, which is not an individual tree but a generation tree looking over the joys and sorrows of generations of men, becomes sacred. Thus common worship or descent from tribal gods, heroes, or saints, which supercedes relationship of totem, serves as binder of tribe or village community in the same manner as communal feasts and village festivals, common lands and pastures, and communal methods in agriculture or irrigation. It is in ideas of divinity that the tribe or village community articulates its social solidarity. Forest deities and boundary godlings are now superseded by national gods or national heroes, or, again, by such representations as "Uncle Sam" or "John Bull", who evoke similar social responses.

Similarly, a small social group which is in danger of being wiped out develops characteristic symbols, formulae, and

ceremonies, and something of divinity is attributed to the social spirit. In Buddhism, the *angha* becomes as much an object of devotion as Buddha himself or the cause of *dharma*. The reason is that the act in such a case represents the fulfilment of all desires and values canalized in a particular direction, and calls for highest devotion and sacrifice. Some of the Christian sects also worshipped and identified God with the forces which brought them together.

CHANGING IDEAS OF GOD.—In modern times Comte's religion of humanity has had many adherents. Indeed, the positivistic tradition founded by him has exerted great influence. From every side we are now hearing that God has no other existence beyond human life and relation, and that religion must be separated from the other-worldly pull of theology and metaphysics. The conviction has also gained ground that it is because the old religions do not have the power to exalt human and social values that nations have drifted into materialism. While Comte was unable to sever his associations with organized Christianity, retained ritualism, and worship, and sought the dedication of humanity, many sincere thinkers see God only in human experiences and activities and find nothing in humanity for worship. A recent writer says: "Humanity is not an entity, nor is it a sort of supreme personality which may be worshipped. Religion will mean the valuing of experiences and activities, the striving for their realization, the loyalty to their call." Some writers have even gone to the extent of conceiving God as finite and imperfect, often crying like man and needing all the while man's help.

SOCIAL FACTORS OF OUR TIME.—Our first task in these conditions is to realize that social interests and experiences must determine the mould in which we express our conceptions of the nature and functions of divinity. ■ the modern democratic upheaval the old social alignments have been swept away, and the conception of level and hierarchy, whether among men or among gods, is out of place.

Secondly, law can no longer be regarded as the fiat of the ruler, unalterable and external to the people. Law is something which is moulded by the interaction of classes and interests within the State, and like all human contrivances has a chequered history. Thus conceptions of the degree of

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an almighty God seated "high on a throne of royal state", or of an inexorable Fate, are alike unsuitable for an age which sees the expression of human will and ideal in forms of government and codes of legislation.

Thirdly, the modern age has seen an exuberant variety of groups and associations which co-operate or conflict with one another, serving as objects to which individuals direct their activities to obtain different kinds of satisfaction. Values and interests are moulded in the crucible of groups. What are uppermost in man's mind are his myriad loyalties; his chief ethical aim is to interweave and build together the different loyalties on an ideal value-plane. Personality develops out of a process of interweaving of group interests and values with clearly marked out and even stereotyped loyalties. Thus the conception of an ideal Person, derived from a social system in which man's inner adjustment was much simpler, is now difficult of acceptance.

MODERN INTELLECTUAL CHAOS.—This difficulty is enhanced by the fact that the modern age is characterised by a chaos of values and ideals. There is no harmonious blending of different values in the individual mind. Thus man changes his group allegiances quickly, and chronically suffers from a conflict or repression of the instinctive drives. This constantly leads to new organisation of impulses and interests, and renewal of effort at adaptation.

A social situation like this shows at once the supreme failure and necessity of religion. Man by his knowledge and experience, and by trial and error, must reconcile the conflicting urges and values into mental patterns and find in them some trend which he can consciously strive after. Religion will then come in and will further and complete the process of organisation of impulses and the fusion and harmony of values on the ideal plane.

POSITIVIST IDEAS OF GOD.—Man's groping for such an inner adjustment and harmony has been characteristic of many of our present day social and economic ideals, some of which have been the outcome of a good deal of honest and sincere thinking and feeling, and have even usurped the place of religion. The first endeavour was, of course, that of Comte with his religion of Humanity. The high priests of this faith in England were John Stuart Mill and Frederick Harrison.

Humanity was here regarded as the ideal destination of man, demanding from him at once loving humility and profound reverence. Similarly we have also an ethical religion which identifies duty with worship. Religion, according to Sheldon, for instance, implies the surrender of one's will to ideal or sacred principles which are to him the expression of the love, destiny or worth of the human soul. We have also an economic religion which vocalises the supreme necessity of being a producer. If everybody takes up the task of production as a religious duty, Carver thought, the economic world would be God's universe. A democratic conception of God has also been in the air for some time and has elicited a good deal of social fervour. In this view, God is the group mind, which is something more than the summation of individual minds. God is perceived in myriad ways, in myriad allegiances of the individual to groups. Society, which is the basis of both individual and group lives, is here the large figure from which is projected the conception of God. As society is always becoming, making itself more and more excellent, more beautiful, more just, the conception of God is not that of an eternally perfect being, but of a finite creature — helpless as man himself and working out his own destiny with the help of his younger brother, man. Overstreet eloquently pleads for a finite struggling God that —

"The society democratic from end to end, can brook no such radical class distinction as that between a superior being favoured with eternal and absolute perfection and the mass of beings doomed to the lower ways of imperfect struggle. It is the conception of the God that is ourselves, in whose end of whom we literally are; the God that, in every act and intention, we, with all our countless fellows, are realising. It is a God that in one respect is in the making, growing with the growth of the world, suffering and sinning and conquering with it, a God, in short, that is the world in the spiritual unity of its own-life."

But perhaps the best positivistic attitude towards religion, from the philosophical point of view, is that represented by Stanley Hall. He identifies God as the primordial urge of evolution and forecasts that the future object of worship is to reach the consummation of mutual help, which represents the goal of organic evolution. Most marvellous instances of mutual service are to be found among the social animals and insects, some of which are vastly older than man himself,

rising above all relativities, including such things as evolution, humanity, man-god, Zeitgeist, or a superhuman hero-spirit, that man can attain the perfect unity and stability of all his impulses and interests. Thus any naturalising of religion which stops short of a complete harmony and certainty in the world of consciousness gives a finite and uncertainly reliable object of worship, and as such cannot claim complete and unqualified adoration.

SOCIAL EFFORT NOT ADVERSE TO RELIGION.—No doubt the search for a social basis of religion has arisen from the belief in an incompatibility between the quest for God and social endeavour. This belief has apparent justification in the universality of asceticism, which frankly repudiates natural human relationships, and in the life of mystics, who in their exclusive consciousness shew all earthly or social obligations, which they abjure as rotten or degrading. The opposition between worship and social aspiration is illegitimate. Religion in its genuine historical forms has derived social relations and obligations from worship. The Fatherhood of God has emphasised the spiritual ties of the Brotherhood of Man. Indeed, a duty born of an evolutionary or social aspiration becomes sanctified and unites the persons concerned by an invisible and holy tie when religion dictates or sanctions it. It is thus that metaphysics at its best does promote social aspirations and strengthen the power that makes for justice and righteousness. Such metaphysics creates—

"Type of the tree whose leaf has never rotted,
True to the hundred paths of heaven and home."

ETERNAL KNOWLEDGE OF GOD AND MAN.—The true, the good, and the beautiful, which are proper human aims, are not merely subjective and dependent on the constitution of human faculties. They have an objective reality which would remain though men and societies were not. They are subjective because they would not be experienced as values unless they satisfied men. They are objective because they are in once the sphere and operating cause from which all phenomena, including human and social, spring. Thus the end of human life is superhuman, eternal, absolute, divine as Plato conceived it. In this conception virtue is divested altogether of the character of law; to follow it is in no sense

an obedience, its realization establishes man in communion with God. Religion at its best always substitutes an affinity or kinship between God and man for the authoritative distinction between right and wrong; for the law of a social evolutionary process, as the basis of man's dealings with fellow-men. Christianity, for instance, insists upon the Gospel to the exclusion of Law, and relies for social justice and righteousness on the kinship which man may establish with Christ. Hinduism similarly regards love and justice as the very essence of the Self, and refers social endeavour to the inherent desire of man to establish harmony and communion with all sentient existence. Social aspiration, therefore, is the derivative of man's relation with God. It is not something worshipped for what it is going to be, but is nothing more and nothing less than love and veneration of man here and now for the All-True, the All-Good, and the All-Beautiful, who is present though eternal—the Loving and Loving original of man's vision of life and love.

CHAPTER IX

PERSONAL AND INSTITUTIONAL RELIGION

WHY MAN IS RELIGIOUS.—The question of what elicits the religious attitude ought to be distinguished at the outset from the problem of what constitutes that attitude. The religious attitude may be evoked by the forces of the environment eliciting fear, or veneration, or by the conditions of the bodily system predisposing ecstasy or depression, or, again, by the force of social tradition and institutions including faith and devotion. It is, however, the constituents of religious attitude, such as fear or love, belief or inspiration, vivid imagery or abstract concept, which determine in essence the quality of the religious life.

ANALYSIS OF THE RELIGIOUS ATTITUDE.—The psychological approach to religion thus consists in the study of the constituents of the religious consciousness in the background of the determining environmental, personal, and social factors. Institutions such as language and imagery hardly call upon the individual to contribute anything of his own; these stand as objects to which the individual is expected merely to adjust himself. It is different in the case of religion. Most of the historical religions trace their origin to a religious prophet. It is his personal attitude, his hopes and fears, beliefs and faiths, which leave an indelible impress on the first draft of the creed. It is true that the original religious ideas are elaborated and modified beyond recognition by the environmental and social forces at work. It is also true that the religious prophets themselves imbibe their attitude from the environment in which they live and grow. Nevertheless, the mark of individual creation is unmistakable upon the religious system, as it is not in the case of language. Hence it will be an error to assume that religion is merely a *fait social*, or is *produit direct des sentiments collectifs*. The task of the social psychologist therefore is to analyse the conscious commitments of the religious attitudes, emotions, ideas, and emotions, and to seek their causal determinants,

on the one hand, in the life history of the individual; and, on the other, in the factors of the environment, social and physical.

INSTITUTIONAL RELIGION.—An institutional religion, i.e. a system of religious rites, ceremonies, and institutions, perpetually demands adaptive responses of the individual. It is based essentially on a congruence of motor attitudes of different individuals. For this reason all religions rest upon certain taboos, injunctions, or exhortations. In primitive society, economic, social, and religious interests were interlarded with one another; religion representing the means of individual and social adjustment to the extra-human environment. In the ordinary routine of life, or in individual or social crises such as represented by birth, marriage, death, disease, war, food-seeking, etc., institutional religion thus regulates social and economic interests. Totemism and its attendant ceremonies relating to the food quest, magic and incantations which induce rainfall or check prairie fire, the different kinds of taboos relating to incest and exogamy, sacrifices to earth-spirits or goddesses of fertility for agricultural prosperity, ceremonies connected with the daily occupation of life, or taboos relating to food, dress, or behaviour, or, again, dances and mimetic ceremonies connected with war—all these represent the dominant sway of institutional religion over every phase of the primitive man's behaviour. By him, then, religion comes to be regarded as a source of moral conduct and practical wisdom. When it fails to guide the behaviour of individuals, religion languishes and a crisis arises. Religion offers an easy guidance to the individual by knitting together his manifold natural impulses to action into certain harmonious patterns. When this guidance fails the need arises for a re-orientation of behaviour, and, consequently, for the formation of new motor patterns. Religious rites like the *namaz* among the Muhammadans, or other forms of congregational worship, exhibit remarkable attempts at standardization of responses. Similar instances are making the sign of the cross, bowing the head, gestures made with the fingers, movements of hands during worship, etc., which are all standardized activities of particular religious groups. Religious mutilations, scars, decorations, ornaments, or marks also signify common responses. Institutional religions

everywhere involve sacraments, such as baptism, confirmation, initiation, etc., which must be undergone by every member of a religious group as a social and religious obligation. The building of temples, mosques, and churches is also a part of every social religion, which declares that he who builds a shrine of God obtains spiritual benefit. Many of the motor activities we meet with in both savage and civilized religions are in their common forms of drill disciplining the individual in his religious behaviour, so that when a religious situation arises all men may behave alike. To that extent a religious rite serves the same purpose as the soldier's drill; and indeed, the breach of religious rites is marked with the same severe social disapprobation as a lapse in the soldier's daily routine. Even when the religious feeling and ideal are wholly lacking, the mere observance of the motor attitude ensures a place for the individual amongst the faithful. Institutional religion involves not merely obligatory systems of behaviour, but also taboos and inhibitions which relate to the various practical activities of life. The prohibition of certain kinds of food or of drink goes together with certain obligatory observances before eating and drinking. For this reason, when a new mode of life is adopted by the people, it is the religious restrictions that hamper practical life which are given up first. Institutional religion thus suffers in prestige.

PERSONAL RELIGION.—We must distinguish personal religion from institutional religion. In the case of the former, it is the inner processes, feelings, and ideas, which constitute the essence of the religious attitude. The motor attitude comes as a distraction and is sought to be inhibited as far as possible. In the latter case, as we have seen, the conscious states recede in the background. The same fact explains why the follower of a personal religion who believes in contemplation and communion seeks quiet and isolation, and release from manifold reciprocal behaviour which emphasizes the motor attitude rather than what the devotee seeks in the realm of feelings and ideas.

COLLECTIVE MYSTICISM.—It must be admitted that there are certain religious cults that seek mystic experience in collective worship. Such, for instance, are the cults of the Thracian Dionysus and the Indian Trishakti, in which wide

or hemp is taken by a group of devotees in order to induce a state of ecstasy. Similarly the Bamachari Tantrik cult in Bengal and Assam seeks to induce a state of ecstatic emotion through the collective incitement of the sex feeling. In both these instances the emotion aroused is intensive in character. As a consequence there is an inhibition of definitely directed motor responses—a phenomenon usual in the case of all intensive emotions. Thus the purpose of isolation is served through the intensification of emotions.

REVOLT OF THE MYSTIC AGAINST FORMAL RELIGION.—There seems to be a kind of inverse relation between inner experience and the observance of religious rites and ceremonies. The mystic Kabir sings :—

" If union with God be obtained by going about naked,
All the dross of the flesh shall be saved
What mattereth it whether man goeth naked or wearth a darskin,
If he recognise not God in his heart ?
If perfection be obtained by shaving the head,
Why should not sheep obtain salvation ?
If, O brethren, the constant man is saved,
Why should not a swarth obtain the supreme reward ?
Saikh Kabir, hear, O my brethren,
Who hath obtained salvation without God's name ? "

Similarly, in a Sikh poem we read :—

" Of what use to turn the beads on my beads, if my heart, like the earth,
turn not around its Son, in an eternal journey unbroken by a
step ?
Surrender is the planetary march of our life round a higher life of heaven
The heart-beats, the breath, the tongue, the pores of skin, the mind,
the footfalls, all must repeat 'Hull, Marit !' with a rosary
made of the beads of love, of tear-drops for all.
Not to be a priest with beads, but to be a rosary ourselves made of
heart-beats, moving as He may move, obedient to His Will,
we live as the Children of Song ! "

CRUX'S FEAR OF THE MYSTIC.—Rites and ceremonies thus appear not only superfluous, but also as hindrances to vivid enjoyment of the inner light. The upholder of personal religion for this reason is always looked upon with suspicion by the priesthood and even by the laity. Lombé observes :—

" In his search for God, the mystic goes his own way. If need be he will break aside formulas, rites, and even the priest who would serve him as mediator. And he seizes from the divine union with a supreme man of divine knowledge, he holds that ultimate truth has been revealed to him. Persons of this sort, harbouring such convictions, may obviously be dangerous to the

stability of any institution that has come to regard its truths as the only truths, and its way of worship as the only way. And so it comes to pass that the more highly institutionalised are the specially minded religions, the less tolerant they are of mystical piety when it rises beyond the ordinary."

On the other hand, the mystic also attempts to follow his inclinations so far as they are not incompatible with the teachings of the ecclesiastical authorities.

EXAMPLES OF MYSTIC EXPERIENCE.—The difference between personal and institutional religion will be more evident if we analyse the contents of consciousness in each. Mystic experience has been said to be unique for each individual. Yet we find that there is a marked resemblance between the experiences of mystics, not merely of the same race or cult, but also of different social orders and religions. Certain general characteristics of mystic experience can thus be culled from testimonies, highly coloured though these may be by individual peculiarities. It seems that the essence of the mystical consciousness consists in the intense experience of an ineffable reality, "from which speech and mind," say the *Upanishads*, "turn back, failing to reach." Similarly St. John of the Cross describes the condition called the "union of love" reached by "dark contemplation", in which the soul "finds no terms, no means, no comparison whereby to render the sublimity of the wisdom and the delicacy of the spiritual feeling with which she is allied. . . . We receive this mystical knowledge of God clothed in none of the kinds of images, in none of the sensible representations, which our mind makes use of in other circumstances."¹ This ineffable experience, however, becomes for the mystic a profound sense of reality. The sage of the *Upanishads* cries out in the certainty of truth:—"Listen, O ye children of the Immortal! I have found the One Great Absolute Being resplendent in his glory beyond the mass of darkness." Angela of Foligno thus describes the *lucid vision* in which she perceived the truth:—

"The eyes of my soul were opened, and I beheld the plenitude of God, whereby I did comprehend the whole world, both here and beyond the sea, and the Abyss and all things else, and therein did I behold naught save the divine power in a manner assuredly indescribable, so that through excess of marvelling the soul cried with a loud voice, saying: 'This whole world is full of God.'"²

¹ James, *Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 407.

² *Clouds of Mysticism*, p. 62n.

Again,

"As men as being—whereas in all our care—as once as sentient, beyond darkness, existence, or trouble, where I have triumphed in a solitude that God is not above."¹

But along with this certitude the mystics feel the poignancy of disappointment as the way of self-expression. It would, however, be a serious error to assume a nihilism of the intellect from the mystic's sense of disappointment and limitation in communicating his revelation. For even poets, musicians, and artists are in the same predicament. Much more than these, the mystic feels the contrast between the vision which inspires him and his feeble definition of the meaning and implications it carries. Thus mystics constantly speak of "the undemonstrable but irrefragable certainty of God".² The Buddhist nun, Sonā, who was placed first among the Bhikkhunis for capacity of effort, pondering hereon, one day muses thus:—

"Then as I grappled with the three-fold course,
Clear above for me the Eye Celestial
I knew the 'how' and 'when' I came to birth
Down the long past, and where it was I lived.
I cultivate the signless, and my mind
In uppermost composure concentrate
Mind is the ecstasy of freedom won
As Path merges to Fruit and Fruit in Path
Holding to naught I am Nibbana free.
This five-grouped being have I understood
Cut from its root, all outward growth is stayed.
I, too, am stayed, victor on barren earth
Immovable Rebirth comes never more."³

This certainty is essentially in the nature of an insight. James quotes a young philosopher who says that "the revelation is, if anything, non-emotional. It is utterly flat."⁴ Swami Vivekananda also describes the state thus: "Thus is no feeling of I, and yet the mind works, disinterested, free from restlessness, objectless, bodiless."⁵ The non-emotional character of the religious revelation bestowing a profound insight into the Universe is expressed in the following Sikh poem on Simran:—

¹ James, *Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 209.

² *Ibid.*, p. 202.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 209.

"I do not know why, but when I say 'Hail, Master!' the sun and stars seem to run in my breath, my muscles are as if fibres of light, my being flies to strange lands and waters, my lips touch gardens of flowers, my hands I exchange with some other hands, a stranger moves my tongue. The Universe runs into me, and I into the Universe.

I seem a strange rusty iron. Like vapour I pass into the being of others, and they passing within me become my guests.

It seems fair forms of sailing beauty sail as waves on the sea—Hail, Lord! All are each other's!

Our shape and limbs run into each other.

I find my bones at times strike within me against the bones of some one else.

Our deeds and thoughts join and run into each other.

I see a hundred souls blend in me, and I interchange my blood and brain thus with a hundred souls as a single breath: and, calm in solitude, I find a society."

Buddhaghosa, in his description of the characteristics of *samādhi*, also brings out the non-emotional character of the mystical consciousness. He says:—

"The concentration of mind called *Samādhi* has as its characteristic mark the absence of wandering, of distraction, as its essence the binding together of the states of mind that arise with it (as water does the matter of soap); as its condition precedent calmness; as its consequent wisdom (for it is said: 'He who is at peace he knows and sees'). And in the specific meditation it has ease as its proximate cause. It must throughout be understood as steadiness of mind (like the steadiness of the flame of a lamp in a place where there is no wind)."

The description of the mystic state by one of Buddha's leading disciples, Anuruddha, is more precise.

"And I concentrated with rapture, and without it, with delight and with indifference. And there is one, with concentration so perfected, to whom alone the knowledge and the insight that my emancipation was sure, that this was my last life, that there was no more becoming."

It is the insight then which constitutes the essence of mystic consciousness. The emotive factor in the shape of delight or rapture, though frequently present, is not indispensable.

EMOTION IN MYSTIC EXPERIENCE.—But emotions, when these are present, have an important rôle to play. These sustain the mystic in his strenuous exercise of contemplation. Sometimes preoccupation with emotional enjoyments

¹ *Yogachara Manual*, p. xxv.

² *Majjhima Nikaya*, I, 117, quoted in Edgar Drewitt's *Medieval Psychology*, p. 157.

becomes an impediment to the attainment of the insight. Thus in the higher *jhanas* or grades of mystical meditation among the Buddhists we find that emotional rapture or happiness is gradually replaced by complete indifference (*upekkha*). The First *jhana* implies application and concentration of attention. The Second *jhana* is inward tranquillizing of the mind, full of rest and thrilling happiness of rapture.

When next, through the quenching of rest, the *Bhikkhu* abides with equal mind, mindful and discerning, experiencing in the body that pleasure whereof the Aryans declare: "Happy doth he abide with even local mind," so he enters into and abides in Third *jhana*. When next, by putting away both pleasant and painful emotion, by the dying out of the joy and misery he used to know, he enters into and abides in the Fourth *jhana*, that utterly pure lucidity and indifference of mind, wherein is neither happiness nor unhappiness—this is the training of the higher consciousness.¹ In Hindu yoga mysticism, stages of elevated concentration of mind (*Samadhi*) are in like manner clearly distinguished. In the highest the element of feeling and even the duality of subject and object completely disappear. St. John of the Cross condemned a selfish enjoyment of transcendental joy as "spiritual gluttony". St. Victor thus describes how his mystic experience was enlivened by the emotion of love:—

"Tell me, what can be this thing of delight that merely by its memory touches and moves with such sweetness and violence that I am drawn out of myself and carried away, I know not how? I am suddenly renewed. I am changed. I am plunged into an ineffable peace. My mind is full of gladness, and all my past wretchedness and pain is forgot."

On the other hand, the ascendancy of emotions over reason is the fruitful source of bitter struggles and agonies of mind, as well as of much that is harsh, hysterical, and repulsive in religious life. It is well known how many of the best minds of the Middle Ages in Europe suffered great mental tortures. Flashes of blinding spiritual light alternated with a horror of great darkness, the visible and tangible presence of God with the omnipresence of the Devil. Thousands of devils besuaged our tiny Franciscan hermitage; friars could

be seen brandishing their sticks in the air and driving them away like flies. Says Coulton :—

"The early monks encouraged even the most hysterical manifestations. The gift of tears in prayer was especially coveted; and the blessed Eusebius, looking there for a time, nearly blinded herself by trying to recall them artificially with quickness. Vigors and ecstasies were collected, sensual enjoyments of taste, of smell, of touch were eagerly sought and highly prized in religion. Words of prayer would leave a literal taste of honey in the mouth or a smell of incense in the nostrils; again, the ecstasy of devotion would take more violent forms which seemed perilous even to the enthusiastic David of Augsburg, and are altogether horrible to the modern mind, whether Catholic or Protestant. Indeed, the crazy concerts and vain self-torturings recorded in the century from St. Francis to Dante have never been exceeded, and seldom equalled, in other Christian ages. So long as these inventions were not too anti-sacerdotal or too contrary to the two popular currents of religious thought, there was no disavowance that did not find its admirers and its imitators."

Similar hysterical outbursts have also been characteristic of the Dervishes in Islam, amongst whom ecstasies are characterized by tears and a sigh of repentance; the performance of the *zikr*, a convulsive movement of the body forwards and rearwards; the intensive repetition, taken up in chorus by a whole congregation, of a mystic word or syllable as well as a rotatory dance until strength is exhausted; or, again, self-torture with red-hot irons. In the spiritual concerts of the Sufis and the Vaidnavas, where a singer intones mystico-lyrical hymns with instrument accompaniment and rhythmical movement of the limbs interspersed by cries, applause, or dancing, we have, indeed, significant examples of both the right as well as wrong kinds of ecstasy, brought about by identical means in either a well-disciplined or a delirious religious congregation. For appeal to the emotions to the detriment of the inner spirit, it is not the crowd feeling and suggestibility which are always depended upon; the loss of senses is artificially brought about also by ceaseless howling or whirling, by the aid of stimulants and narcotics or even by the infliction of extreme pain.¹ Hysterical exhibitions both in Islam and Hinduanism are equally the result of the absence of an authorized direction and a strong moral discipline, and have rightly been condemned by enlightened Muslims and Hindus.

¹ Coulton, *From St. Francis to Dante*, 2nd edition, 1905, p. 217.

² Lammens, *Islam, Beliefs and Institutions*, p. 184.

LANGUAGE OF MYSTIC EXPERIENCE.—The mystic experience as a rule can hardly be translated into ideas. Ready-made concepts or judgments of reason almost always prove unequal to the representation of the rich and elusive experiences of the inner life. Hence mystics always take refuge in an exuberant variety of images which stand as symbols or represent through analogy the ineffable insight. The Divine communion is sought to be translated in terms of human love. The Vaishnava cult of Bengal and the Sufi cult among the Mohammedans, for instance, have developed a rich poetic literature embodying religious raptures which easily pass for human love lyrics.

PHILOSOPHY OF MYSTIC EXPERIENCE.—The ideational representation may, in fact, be so elaborate that it may develop into a philosophy. The *Upasādhās*, which base themselves on deep mystic insight, represent a complex system of ideology that has furnished materials for the later systems of philosophical speculation. Individual mystics, too, have also sought to envisage a picture of the universe out of the materials of insight. Plotinus amongst the ancients, Augustine, St. Francis, and St. Teresa in the Middle Ages in Europe, have given us such philosophic glimpses. The Bengali mystics of the eighteenth and nineteenth century have likewise given us fairly developed systems of philosophy and theology. Ramaprasad, Kamalakanta, and the Baul group thus have presented us with the theory of the macrocosm in the human body; which has popularised the mystical experiences of the Tantrik school.

The philosophy of mysticism is an attempt to translate the insight in terms of normal, daily experience. The insight is so unusual in its character that it readily makes a break from the tenor of daily life. The memory of the moment would overwhelm the devotee and readily assume the guise of the usual and familiar imagery. There would necessarily be an attempt to link the images into a coherent chain, and this would result in an ideology which would make the translation between the daily life and the mystic moment as smooth as possible. This effort, however, meets with but partial success. The more absorbing the insight the less is it capable of translation. Hence the mystic often maintains a duality in the system of experiences.

DISSOCIATION OF MYSTICISM FROM ORDINARY LIFE.—In such cases the mystic vision cannot effectively influence behaviour. Mystics have at some stage or other of their contemplative life experienced great suffering due to the conflict between the inner experiences and the daily routine of life. The reason is the same as in other cases of dissociation. Every experience tends normally to translate itself either into speech or other forms of muscular movement. When such channels of expression are closed for some reason or other—in other words, when the conduct of life is untouched by the insight—a spiritual unrest follows. In many cases the rapture and illumination interpolate in the normal daily life and supply a new motive to behaviour, and a novel interpretation to life. In some cases the normal habits of life are left quite unaffected by the insight and ecstacy of mystic contemplation. The individual may live a life of utter worldliness, and even of vice and crime, along with a life of emotional religiosity. Notorious as well as secret sins were committed by some prelates of the Middle Ages in Europe, who were otherwise very strict and religious. In the case of some of the Tantrik and Vaishnava mystics in India a life of sexual excess which would be regarded as immoral, or even criminal, may co-exist and alternate with religious devotion. Benvenuto Cellini is a well-known instance in Europe.

"He lived in an atmosphere of exalted religious emotion. Yet his life was one of profligacy and murder, lived without any consciousness of immorality. His religion meant nothing to his morality. He could murder his enemy in cold blood just as he was leaving mass filled with beautiful religious emotions. In prison, he was sustained with an uplifting sense of the divine favour, and records that for ever afterwards he had an aureole of glory on his head."²

It is thus evident that the motor attitude is not part and parcel of certain phases of mystic life.

INSTITUTIONAL RELIGION AND BEHAVIOUR.—This feature forms the basis of contrast between personal and institutional religion. In institutional religion it is the behaviour which is of primary importance. An institutional religion comes into being when a number of people agree in their devotional practice. There must be a uniformity in the responses

² *Thoreau, An Introduction to the Psychology of Religion*

demand by the religious objects and situations. In order that this uniformity of motor attitude may be maintained it is essential that there should be an adequate interpretation of such objects and situations. An ideology of religious observances is thus a necessary adjunct of institutional religion. As a consequence of this ideational translation there develops religious emotion. The quality of emotion would vary in different sects and in different persons. In fact, it is the religious emotion which serves to make the observances popular and agreeable.

DIFFERENCES OF PERSONAL AND INSTITUTIONAL RELIGION.—The difference between personal and institutional religion is unmistakable. In the former case the insight or the inner experience constitutes the primary fact. Emotions are often present, but are not essential to the insight. Ideas, however, fail to translate the inner experiences. Images and symbols consequently arise, and seek to represent, however inadequately, the mystic vision for purposes of intersubjective reference. The relation to the motor life is still more remote. It is as a result of a strenuous and prolonged pursuit of the mystic way that the elation and insight can impress themselves upon the daily routine of life. Ordinarily there remains a gulf between the subjective experience and the round of duties. Institutional religion begins with the motor responses in the form of rites and ceremonies. The ideology differs according to age, sex, and personal history; it is different also in different cultural epochs. Its main purpose is to supply the motive for maintaining in the community a uniformity of religious behaviour. Emotions rarely play an effective rôle. Routine religious behaviour springs from the traditional opinions and beliefs that interpret for the individual his religious objects and religious rites. Thus in the former case the primary psychic process is essentially subjective. The insight or inspiration is more significant. Emotion and behaviour are superimpositions. In the latter case religious life is essentially an adjustment of group behaviour. Idea and emotion serve to sustain the motor attitude.

CHAPTER X

MYSTICISM OF SEX AND LOVE

IMPULSE, A DETERMINANT OF WORSHIP.—We have seen (Chapter II) that it is the complete fusion of a large number of impulses and interests in a religious object or image which is at the root of worship. But the tenor of worship is determined by a dominant impulse. Indeed, the shifting character of the mental pattern is the basis of the variety of symbols which the individual creates and recreates as his worship becomes more profound. This is met with in the case of mystics in every religion who achieve the emptying of their subconscious. Normally, the fulfilment of such impulses as are denied in the physical and human situation is sought on the plane of ideas, images, and symbols. Thus religious symbols like dreams and reveries bear the impress of an individual's psychic constitution and of the privation of his dominant impulses and interests brought about either by himself or in the course of circumstances. We have seen (Chapter III) how in the case of primitive man the constant fear for his life and dread of a hostile environment are the fertile ground of conception of powers which are terrible, and yet in which he finds solace of mind. Indeed, the advance from savagery to civilization, from insecurity to security of life, has been accompanied by an emphasis of the beneficent attributes of the divinity. Thus the belief in God's Providence did not arise in religion before society attained a good deal of stability.

RELIGION OR SECURITY TESTED BY WAR.—During the Great War the suffering caused was so acute, the fear so widespread, that man's instinct of self-preservation rebelled against the prevailing concept of a beneficent divinity, and varied and heartrending were the cries of despair against a satanic world and an ungodly god. H. G. Wells thus speaks through Mr. Bantling :

"Why, if I thought there was an omnipotent God who looked down on battles and deaths and all the waste and horror of this

war—able to prevent these things—doing them to answer himself—I would split as his empty foot.”

The following is not cynicism, but an outburst of sincere religious anguish :

“ God is helpless to prevent war, or else He wills it and approves of it. There is the alternative. You pay your money and you take your choice . . . if God wills war, then I am morally mad and life has no meaning. I hate war, and if God wills it, I hate God, and I am a better man for hating him, that is the pass it brings me to in that case the first such great commitment is : ‘ Thou shalt hate the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and then only shalt thou detect and despise ’ ”.

We thus see how the denial of the impulse of self-preservation and constant fear and anxiety in the trenches here have shorn God of that universal attribute of beneficence with which society has endowed Him in the course of age-long devotion.

GROUP IMPULSE AND GROUP RELIGION.—Gregariousness is another elemental drive. No age can bear comparison with this in the emphasis of the gregarious disposition in human nature. The individual is now nothing if displaced from his group. The process of standardization is levelling down all individual idiosyncrasies under the steam-roller of uniformity. Individual ideas and feelings to-day are more determined by the social environment than ever before. Thus a social conception of religion has now emerged and God is regarded as equivalent to the group-spirit. Indeed, the conception of God as wholly incarnate in human life here and now, and as having no other existence than as guiding principles of social life, is quite in keeping with the exaggerated emphasis of gregariousness in the present age.

SEX URGE AND ITS SUBIMATION IN RELIGION.—Sex is an urge which is the most plastic thing in man's nature and the most all-determining for his career. Recent studies in the physiology and psychology of sex have gone to show that sexual desires and emotions have a basis much wider than the sex organs proper, that these are present both in generalized as well as specific forms, and may be stimulated by ideas and images as well as by sensations. Stanley Hall remarks :

¹ Quoted in Otto's *Flower and Ethic*, p. 222.

"Almost anything or any act may become an erotic fetish, and the calcifications of love are seen not merely in the best amorous literature but in the passionate raptures of mystics to be completely absorbed in the Divine union. Very much of that which makes or mars life is due to whether man's affections grovel or climb, and no psychologist can fail to see that love of God and the libido have the same mechanism, and that religious and sex normality and abnormality are very closely connected. 'Love rules the camp, the catet, the grove, for love is God and God is love.'"

Sex is, indeed, most intimately related to art and religion. Sex attraction easily leads to æsthetic contemplation, and the latter is but one phase of religious experience. The whole process will be evident from the following analysis of Edward Carpenter :—

"The youth sees the girl : it may be a chance face, a chance outline amidst the most banal surroundings. But it gives the cue. There is a memory, a confused remembrance. The mortal figure without penetrates to the immortal figure within—and there arises into consciousness a shining form, glorious, not belonging to this world, but vibrating with the age-long life of humanity, and a memory of a thousand love-dreams. The waking of this vision intoxicates the man : a glow and balm within him ; a goddess (it may be Venus herself) stands in the sacred place of his temple ; a sense of awe-struck splendour fills him and the world is changed."

Many cults and religious practices have utilised man's affections and directed them to the pursuit of God. The sex-urge is all-compelling and all-regulating, and thus when it is educated for religion we have most remarkable instances of religious ecstasy and æsthetic comprehension of the universe woven together in a delicate human-divine symbolism. The same urge which, when unregulated, shows itself in brutal lust and aberrations without number, or in right social use carries on the destiny of men, is able to fashion, when religiously organised, a life in which the senses become so many roads to the realisation of God as the essence of Beauty. Religion then becomes an spontaneous and infinite in its joys as love itself.

LOVE-RELIGION OF THE SUFIS.—For the Sufis, the mystic sect of Islam, earthly affection is a bridge leading to God.

"Muhabbat is verily a link of the chain of concord that bindeth the lover to the beloved ; as an attraction of the attractions of the beloved, that draweth to himself the lover and, to the degree that him to himself it draweth, efflueth something of his existence so that, first, from him it attracteth all his qualities ; and then snatcheth into the grasp of God his soul."

¹ *The Ascent of Man*, translated by Charles, p. 102.

The senses are here the means of knowing Beauty, which is the very essence of God. To know Beauty one must love. Thus the Sufi begins in the senses but does not end there. Unless one knows earthly affection he cannot reach ideal love; but mere earthly love is barren. "Our senses barren are; they come from barren soil." Thus Jami, one of the great mystics and poets of Persia, says:—

"Though in this world a hundred tasks thou try'st,
 'Tis love alone which from thyself will save thee
 Even from earthly love thy face avert not,
 Since to the real it may serve to ease thee.
 If thy steps be strangers to love's pathway,
 Depart, learn, love and then return before too
 For, shouldst thou fail to drink wine from Form's flagon,
 Thou canst not share the draughts of Ideal.
 But yet, beware! Be not by Form belated;
 Strive rather with all speed the bridge to traverse,
 If in the beam thou fail wouldst bear thy baggage,
 Upon the bridge let not thy footsteps linger"

Whenever a man loves he tastes the eternal Beauty; for Beauty is everywhere, in the rose, in the candle, in the sun, in Laila's hair, in wine, or in the tavern,

"Praise to the Lord of all the universes!
 Each speak of matter did he constitute
 A mirror causing each one to reflect
 The beauty of His vanguard. From the rose
 Flashed forth His beauty, and the nightingale
 Beholding it, loved madly. Praise that drew
 The candle drew to lustre which beguiles
 The moth to destruction. On the sea
 His beauty shone, and straight-way from the wave
 The lotus reared its head. Each shining lock
 (If Laila's hair attracted Maymun's heart
 Because some ray divine reflected shone
 In her fair face. Thus He to Sharn's lips
 Who lent that sweetness which had power to steal
 The heart from Parviz, and from Farhad lent
 His beauty everywhere doth show itself,
 And through the forms of earthly benefactor shone
 Obscured as through a veil. He did reveal
 His face through Joseph's coat, and so destroyed
 Zulika's power. Where'er thou meet a veil
 Beneath that veil He hides. Whatever heart
 Doth yield to love, He charms it. In His love
 The heart hath life. Longing for Him, the soul
 Hath victory. That heart which seems to love
 The fair ones of this world loves Him alone"

For the Sufis earthly enjoyment is no mere animal

passion but a heavenly bliss, an apprehension of Beauty, and it is no mere metaphor or symbolism when they ask to regard wine, torch, and beauty in the following manner :—

"Wine, torch, and beauty all are present ;
Neglect not to embrace that beauty.
Quaff the wine of dying to self, and for a moment
Peradventure you will be freed from the dominion of self
Drink wine, for its cup is the foot of the Friend,
The flagon is like eye drunken and flown with wine "

Nor is there any fear of "the angel of the darker drink ",
For the angel of darkness is one with the Beloved, and about
the Beloved there is no fear or suspicion. Thus life is one
eternal spring-tide of youth, an insatiable quaffing of wine,
a perpetual embrace of the Beloved.

When ultimately man merges himself in the One as the
lover merges in the Beloved, all relativities are dissolved
and man is one with the many in the exercise of all his senses.
Ibnul Farid, the only Arab mystical poet, describes such
a state :—

"I read all the knowledge of the world in a single word and show unto
myself all created things in a single look,
And I hear the voices of those that pray and all their languages in a
time less than the duration of a glance,
And ere mine eye winks, I bring before me what was hard to convey
on account of its distance,
And with one inhalation I smell the perfume of all gardens and the
fragrance of what (herbs) so ever touch the skirts of the wind,
And I survey all regions (of the earth) in a flash of thought and
traverse the seven tiers of Heaven in one step "

Emotional mysticism thus begins with personal affection.
The earthly beloved becomes too good for human nature's
daily food, arouses æsthetic delight, and becomes the subject
and later the symbol of æsthetic contemplation. Gradually
the symbol empties itself of its earthly associations, and we
have a glorious vision of Beauty, bedecked with a light that
never was on sea and land. It is still the Beloved, but both
the earthly lover and the Beloved are now transformed. I
am the lover and Thou art the Beautiful. If all the beauties
of the universe are in essence one, thou art the one Beautiful.
As all love is in essence one, I am the one lover. Beauty
appears in ever new guises, and yet the eyes do not have their
fill. Love also is immortalised. Jalaluddin Rumi, the great
mystical poet of Persia, says :—

"Happy the moment when we are seated in the palace, thou and I,
With two forms and with two figures but with one soul, thou and I,
The colours of the grove and the vices of the hands will bestow
immortality

At the time when we came into the garden, thou and I."

But gradually the duality disappears:—

"I am He whom I love, He whom I love is I,
We are two sparks dwelling in one body."

In Sufi mysticism earthly love is not disregarded but blossoms forth through the cult of Beauty into Divine love. In many Sufi fraternities, along with an intensive repetition of the name of God or of a mystic pronoun, mystical poems are also recited in which the divine love is celebrated with a profusion of images and of realistic comparisons borrowed from the language of profane love. "There is nothing in this promiscuity," observes Lacowens, "to shock the spirituality of a Ghazal." The Quran, it is urged, does not meet every circumstance nor all the diversity of moral situations and familiarity with the sacred text, and ends by blunting the sensibility of the congregation. The effect of lyrical poetry, above all when music is added to heighten its impression, is to induce ecstasy. With the sublimations of the desires and emotions of sex a rich and tender symbolism develops which indicates that the mind has moved far away from the pleasures of the senses. The Beloved appears in the cheeks of the fair maiden, in the bubbling wine of the crystal cup, in the flame of the candle, in the sweet song of the nightingale, or in the soft breeze of the moonlit grove. Much of this symbolism is art and worship. The fair idol is the Beloved. Her lips open to the inscrutable mysteries of God. Her tresses and curls illustrate incomprehensibility. Her eye betokens frowns and coquetry, now holding aloof from its lover, now gazing upon of her eye and lip. Ask an embrace; one saith nay; the other yes. Beauty is Truth, manifested and present; 'tis the beam of the light of spirits; 'tis the greatest of signs. Wine, the torch, and beauty are epiphanies of truth. The wine-house is the fountain of meditation. Wine is the rapture that maketh the Sufi lose himself at the manifestation of the Beloved. By it, that one swalloweth at our draught the cup, the wine-house, the *saki*, and the wine-drinker, and yet open remaineth ■■■ mouth.¹

¹ *The Asrar-i-Y-Mawf, introduction, p. 111*

LOVE-RELIGION OF SAHAJA.—No such symbolism characterizes the strange cult known as Sahaja, an offshoot of Vajrayana Buddhism, which either came to Eastern India through Nepal, or was developed in India by the Buddhist monks and nuns when they lived a freer life in the sanghas.¹

It disregards altogether idolatry as well as Brahmanism and cult of sacrifice, and emphasizes a course of psycho-physiological discipline of the mind. It recommends worship of man and woman, and frankly recognizes the adoration of the opposite sex as the road to mental illumination and ultimately salvation. The pitfalls are not disregarded. Over and over again it is repeated that Sahaja can be understood only by the gifted few. Chandidas sings:—

"Sahaja, Sahaja, everyone speaks of Sahaja,
But who knows what Sahaja means?
One who has crossed the dark Night
Can alone know Sahaja.
Near the moon there is Beauty,
And she is the essence of Love;
Nectar and Power dwell in her heart,
Who can know true Love?
The mango fruit is full of juice, but tastes bitter from the skin, so
is true
Love bitter outside, but sweet if one can reach its kernel."

Again, the cult of Sahaja is regarded as promising only when the lover and the beloved are both spiritually minded, and one does not drag down the other. Sahaja, literally, means spontaneous, and the cult advocates a fervent romantic passion so profound and yet so chorn of sense enjoyment that the union between the lover and the beloved is one care-free, eternal interpenetration which is God itself. So supreme an ecstasy, where love is Truth and Truth is love, is not possible in the case of mixed souls. "The woman who loves an unworthy man will share the fate of a flower that is pierced with thorns, she will die of a broken heart: and the youth who falls in love with a woman of lower spiritual degree will be tossed to and fro in great unrest and will give

¹ The word was formerly known as Sahajamaya, and it appears that the Buddhist or Tantric Sahajyas cultivated Knowledge or Power in association with women according to prescribed rituals. Khandachandra Sen refers to the connection to some Buddhist sects mentioned in the Katha Vajru (third century A.C.), amongst whom a devoted couple with united resolve (*chakrapaya*) dwelt together ever together. Later on the Vaishnava Sahajyas made the word their own by an emphasis of passionate love.

way ■ despair." For both extremes non-attachment is necessary. Chandidas sings again :—

"The moon loves the lotus and
Yet lives very far,
Between a worthy man and woman,
Love is from distance, yet soothes the heart
One who loves for her own dear
Cares not for Truth,
Like the bee she comes and drinks honey,
And cleaves as she is from away in the end."

And, again, "No body can find Hari who pervades the Universe except one who knows the way of true love."

In Sahajiya literature there are as many as eight stages of man-woman love, each being derived from, and purer than, the earlier stage. The earliest stage begins with passion, which is not evil by itself. "It is the seed from which the tree of emotions grows." How true love, which is absolutely free from the touch of sense enjoyment, can be cultivated is explained in detail in one of the secret manuscripts of this religious sect. It describes how the novice is gradually ■ practise non-indulgence by intimacy with a beloved woman, "to lie at her feet for four months without touching her, then to sleep by her side without contact for the next four months, and finally ■ enjoy her sweet embrace without losing his control and equilibrium of mind." At some stage there should be complete separation of the lovers who also should have complete freedom of social intercourse with persons of the opposite sex. Chandidas clearly indicates also that the Sahajiya discipline of sex is accompanied by regulation of breath and other familiar Yogic practices. The meditation of self as the eternal feminine is recommended in the earlier stages, while the mystic concentration of the mind towards "four moons" within the body is also practised. In the final stage the man-woman relationship rises to a high plane of emotional febrity, which aids the acquisition of self-knowledge. ■ should be noted that among the different sects into which the Sahajiyas are divided, it is the Supreme Self rather than God who is the object of contemplation. When the spiritual goal is realised love and beauty need no longer be pursued. "In a dark room light is necessary to dispel darkness and to see the position of things which are there. As soon as one has a look, the light might be dispensed with."¹

¹ H. H. Spar's *Introduction to the First-Chetange Sahajiyat Gita*.

Chandidas himself was a priest of the goddess Bashuli, but he loved with all his soul a washerman's girl by name Rami. The priest was excommunicated for this offense, but it is said that it was her love which brought about his spiritual illumination. To him she appeared entirely bereft of the attributes of profane love, as the universal Mother, the Goddess of Learning, the Spouse of the Lord, as Heaven and Earth, as the center of worship and as worship itself. In Chandidas's experience the boundaries between a romantic passion and the revering adoration for mother, between man-woman and man-God relationship vanished. How strangely similar was the experience of Mme Bruyère! She was rewarded with "the most intimate favours of the Bridegroom," Jesus, followed up by a period of ecstasy associated with spiritual pregnancy. Then the filial and man-woman love intermingled in a sentiment which transcended all human concepts. "A virgin mother, I dared not present to the divine child what a babe desires of its mother. But the child was also the Bridegroom and love of the Bridegroom triumphed over my chaste humility through His caresses. What a swoon of love when the lips of the Bridegroom drew the substance of life from me, ah! when I felt myself passed into Him." With many of the greatest mystics an ardent man-woman desire is interlaced like a deeply hued strand with the rich and variegated texture of mystical love. The latter is a complex pattern, integrating diverse and incompatible impulses and feelings, such as romantic passion, devotion, parental tenderness and resignation, of which now one and then another may be stressed for the time being. Gradually the pattern becomes a harmonious whole, the fusion of feelings and attitudes excluding all concrete emotional manifestations. This is the universal process of the maturation of mystical eroticism to an infinite love bereft of any awareness of sex, a vivid and syncretic experience of all feelings and attitudes that stir man or woman. It would thus be wrong to view Chandidas's fervour or that of the abbess of Solesmes as eroticism, though it is the language of love that expresses it.

Chandidas portrays his purest sentiments in the garb of amorous lyrics, which must not be permitted to deceive us as to the real nature of his mystical love-life. Both his

life as well as his songs were deeply influenced also by the symbolism of Vaishnava literary tradition, in which romantic words of love disguise the ardent experiences and raptures of the soul.

In Vaishnava literature the love of man for God is expressed in terms of a housewife's illicit love. No one can approach God unless he leaves behind the yoke of family and caste and social obloquy. In India the dread of social punishment is the greatest dread. Thus the surrender to God by giving up all social conventions implies the surrender of all values. Such was the love of the poet Chandidas, of Abhiram Swami, and of Vittala, who sacrificed the codes of religion and caste in the altar of love. Thus sings Mira, the royal bard of Udaipur, who gave up her throne rather than join in the bloody worship of Siva:—

"I have the god Gurdhar and no other,
He is my spouse on whose head is a crown of peacock-feathers,
Who garbeth a shell, discus, mace, and lotus, and who weareth a necklace.
I have forfeited the respect of the world by even sitting near holy men.
The matter is now public; everybody knoweth it.
Having felt supreme devotion I die as I behold the world
I have no father, son, or relation with me
I laugh when I behold my beloved, people think I weep
I have planted the seed of love and watered it again and again with
the tears of my eyes
I have cast away my fear of the world what can any one do to me?
Mira's love for her god is fixed, come what may."

In the *Chaitanya Charitamrita* we read:

"The love of the shepherd woman for Krishna should not be mistaken for desire, though it is generally called such for the sake of an apt simile. He who feels the longing for adopting the pastor-like love of the shepherd woman worships Krishna by leaving aside the dictates of the scriptures. He yet must imitate the love of the shepherd woman, and think about the excellent love of Radha and Krishna day and night."

We thus see that the spontaneous relation of Sahaja is incompatible with marriage, or even with love which entails no social obloquy. In fact, it is the social ostracism which purifies and elevates passion into supreme mystical devotion. Both the suffering and non-attachment are described in song as follows:—

"Keep in secrecy the secret love that wraps around all the bonds of society or religion, one can love truly when he can make the frog dance on the mouth of a snake;

The clever lover can stich the mountains in the garland; and bind the elephant in spider web.
He has to bathe with hair dishevelled in the deep waters of obloquy; but neither should he drench himself, nor even touch water
For him happiness and suffering are the same."

In true and worthy union between kindred souls the golden cup, full to the brim, is never less than full so long as they both quaff love; never are they satiated, and their love in limitless expenditure overflows incessantly and drenches the universe. *Salaya* at its best implies that there is neither desire nor non-desire, neither wish nor repression. Love is God's gift, like the bloom of the rose or the glory of the sunset, and is accepted with as much serenity as one enjoys the smell of the flower or the radiance of the sky. Everything in nature is spontaneous, so there should be spontaneity in human love and experience. Neither should there be any effort to seek the physical stimuli, nor any to reject them. Surely a philosophy like this can hold good only for extremely rare souls—for one only in a million, as Chandidas himself warns us. No doubt the sexual mysticism is accompanied by rigorous discipline and preparation of both body and mind, as many of the *Sahajya* devotees clearly have followed and indicated. There is, indeed, an age-long physiological and psychological tradition of such discipline and preparation in India, which perhaps has prevented the cult from degenerating into a sensual practice. On the other hand, the mysticism, through a realization of the divine perfection and infinity of the human lover and beloved, has given us an inspiring vision of the dignity and majesty of Man.¹

Chandidas boldly declares:—

"How Ye, O human creatures!
Above everything else, Man is the real Truth
There is no Reality above Man."

Again:—

"Man, Man, every one speaks of Man,
What is Man?
Man is Wealth, Man is Life, Man is the jewel of the Heart.
Very few on earth know the Truth of Man.
Man knows a love, which other creatures know not,
And man alone knows the depth of such love."

¹ See Chatterjaya, *The Dances of Man, and the Great*.

Man's love helps him to know the real Man,
 Thus man knows Man:
 The strength of man-in-Man is understood by man alone."

EASTERN ATTITUDE TO SEX.—A religion of love and beauty and of passionate spontaneous sex can only survive in old civilisations where a host of taboos and injunctions, ballads, folk-songs, and rituals incubate the romance and spirituality of sex and make it more a steady outpouring of winds than a violent intoxicating experience. Races and peoples differ in their attitude towards sex, and much of this difference is due to control exercised by acquired habits and customs and the breeding and training of this primordial impulse through ages. In the East, substitution, sublimation, and diversion have been the methods in the discipline of the desires and feelings of sex; and we have reaped a rich harvest of symbolism, religious etc. and ritual which serve the purposes of divesting the sexual relationship of much of its explosive, disintegrating character. Indeed, the racial education in sex is responsible for the fact that there is no prudishness about sex in Eastern society. Sex-symbolism and the apparent worship of the sex-organs or of their representations abound in Eastern religions, but in all these we see not an emphasis of sex but rather an attempt to relate religion to the whole life of man—to all his desires and emotions, including the sex desire and emotion.

SUBLIMATION OF THE SEX-URGE IN RELIGION.—We know how many of the Christian mystics, even the most orthodox ones, sought, like the Eastern mystics, a union of their hearts with the sacred Heart of Jesus, and the sorrowful heart of the Virgin, which means identification with the Almighty lover in a passionate embrace. The lives of many Christian mystics, indeed, provide us with examples of an authentic erotic state of transport united to a mystical beatitude.¹ As a matter of fact, the mystic often loves at one and the same time with his body, his heart, and his mind. St. John of the Cross explains: "There is often a temptation to sensual desires during spiritual exercises which are powerless to prevent them. . . . The superior part is allowed to taste of God and to draw spiritual joy from him. But sensuality, which is the inferior part, also finds satisfaction and sensible

¹ See Eliade, *The Mystical Life*, pp. 204, 205.

delight in this favour, incapable as it is of appreciating and experiencing any other kind of pleasure." This is, however, the beginning of contemplation which empties the subconscious. As contemplation deepens, sublimation, projection and symbolization have fuller play and love is gradually deprived of the physical object, sensible representation, or image which quickened, sustained, or coloured it, and can no longer be described as tenderness, filial pity, gratitude, or compassion. "It is rather," as Dumas observes, "all these things at one and the same time, and it is then that it becomes infinite love." Mystical love thus burns with a sacred flame, which lights up and dedicates to God all that is noble and pure as well as what is ignoble and sensual in the mind. All the passion aroused in life by friend, master, child, and wife is offered to God, and if the mystic cannot at once transform sexual into spiritual desire, God may send him "some strange woman with dark eyes and red lips as his emblem". In the cup of reciprocal tenderness and devotion, full to the brim and spilling on all sides, repression or fulfilment, holiness or unholiness are swept away, and in the new innocence and spontaneity of the senses a human passion stands unmasked and unabashed only for unity with God. Mysticism, as we have seen, has its roots in a fusion of all the urges of man. Now, if a dominant impulse like sex be belied or inhibited, there is an undue strain, not merely on the sex life, but also on the whole life of the individual. Here emotional mysticism, saturated with sublimation and symbolism of sex, comes in to restore sanity and balance; God as Love and Beauty fulfils all man's fundamental impulses and interests, and brings about such co-ordination in his mental life that joy as well as knowledge come easily. Love becomes the eternal expression of infinite beauty. The human lover becomes timeless in his sense of joy and beauty, is transported beyond the limits of space and time and foretastes the life immortal. Sex desires vary but mildly amongst different individuals, though they differ most in respect to its satisfaction either in generalized or in specific form. The average man is seldom without a generalized sex desire during most of his life, as well as a specific sex desire focused towards a particular woman, unless there be mental or physical defect or serious malady. A generalized desire of a sexual sort persists along with desire

in a highly specific form, even though the latter might receive adequate satisfaction, and serves as the emotional basis of appreciation and cultivation of art, forms of literature, music, etc. The generalised, personal, and specific desires of sex blend with one another through many stages, and in a normal individual the liability to sex desires of different types is constantly present.¹ Not merely is sex desire constantly operative and powerful; its satisfaction, indeed, represents the reaction of the whole being, an integration of the entire organisation of the mind which is as marked as that which is physiologically effected by the sex-hormones. Therefore it is quite natural that love should become correlated with the mystical consciousness which expresses man's emotional relationship to the world conceived as a whole. There is a great similarity between love and the religious sentiment, and the religious and love patterns may easily slip into each other if the racial education and legacy do not discourage such compound reactions. Sex desires, like the religious sentiment, not only are pervasive and hence harmonise consciousness and behaviour, but also excite emotions and attitudes in their finer ramifications. As the sentiments deepen the love-object is idealised, and in such idealization the mystic's traditions and environment play an important rôle, establishing the correspondence between the religious pattern and the awfully aroused love pattern, and diverting the latter of its physical significance. The maturation of love and religious experience alike, through idealization and symbolization, greatly helps towards resolving all inner conflicts. Thus throughout the world emotional mystics call themselves the brides of God, while the women mystics speak of God as the Betrothed and the Bridegroom. The assumption of the passive feminine attitude solves an inner conflict as well as social predicament in as much as the sex urge which disturbs the course of emotional life is subdued. In the matter of spiritual experience the male desire is projected to God while the feminine attitude, normally suppressed in life, also finds its fulfilment. Such capacity to accept the opposite sex attitude seems essential, according to modern schools of psychology, for resolving many of the disturbances in sexual behaviour. Not merely

¹ See Dunlap, *Sexual Psychology*, chapter II.

the alteration in the attitudes of the lover between masculinity and femininity but also the enactment of the diverse rôles of the parent or child, the sweetheart or mother, the friend or servant, based on the contemplation of religious images according to the person's religious traditions, contribute to deepen both life and religious experience by implicating and orientating the entire gamut of the emotions. Thus is brought about a mental balance and poise, which is the source of insight of the lover and the mystic. Mystical love, indeed, is a complex emotional pattern in which sex love has certainly a place, but which overflows and spills on all sides and into which are introduced other emotional patterns such as the love of parents, of child, of friend, and of those who are under some obligation. The place which sex love occupies in religious mysticism is large or small according to the cultural heritage of peoples and the temperamental features of individuals, which underlie the physiology of the emotions. Love, like religion, is the total reaction of life on a lower phase of consciousness, and its harp-string thus vibrates in peculiar unison with that of religion. The sense of individual relationship which dawns with the arousing of sex ultimately flowers into the perception of Beauty; and in sex we owe the faint and partial beginnings of the human aspect of religion, and man's communion with and union with God as Love and Beauty. It is for this reason that the religion of Love and Beauty must not be dismissed as only for over-sexed or sexually-baffled persons. The normal person has within him a primordial urge which in its fluctuations and clamours might, when properly disciplined and organized, be a source not of distress and strain but of joy and illumination. Sex degrades or diminishes the whole man. As it elevates, we have some of man's most intense joys, some of his most sublime experiences of Truth. No doubt a religion which is rooted in God as Love checks a careless experimentation of love between man and fellow-man, and reveals the fullness of Beauty both in the life of Nature and humanity.

CHAPTER XI

MYSTICISM AS IDEALIZATION OF HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS

SEXUAL MYSTICISM UNIVERSAL.—Mystical religious experience derives its zest from the manifold instincts and impulses of man. While mysticism is rooted in the various fundamental impulses, it not only borrows its symbols and images from the intimacies of human love and aspiration, but it also seeks its co-ordination from the various loyalties in domestic and social life. On account of the imperative and all-determining character of the sex-urge, forms of sexual mysticism are to be found in the art and literature of every country. The Sufis of Persia and Sahajiyas of Bengal made a cult of erotic mysticism, and contended that spiritual love cannot grow unless there be infinite love of one person for another. Both Rumi and Chandidas agreed that love of God was impossible for a soul which has not learnt the depth and intensity of romantic passion. Some of the Sahajiyas, like the modern psycho-analysts, went to the extreme of proving, on any evidence or on none, that the great philosophers of their age, such as Rupa and Sanatana and even the venerable Kṛṇadas Kaviraj and the ascetic Raghunath Dāś, had each experienced a romantic love affair and thus a foretaste of divine love.

Furthermore, there have developed among many peoples forms of emotional mysticism in which not merely sex but also other normal impulses play a religious rôle, and sex becomes so metamorphosed by sublimation that the only thing by which it can be recognized is a voluptuousness deeply enjoyable and satisfying.

INDIAN EMOTIONAL MYSTICISM.—An ardent religious experimentation is as old in India as the *Upanishads*, and diverse have been the schools of philosophy which take their stand on emotional mysticism. It is the *Bhāgavata* which represents the ancient storehouse of mystical tradition, and

we have here princes like Dhruva and Prahlād, a sinner like Ajamil, a concubine like Kujja, a devotee like Uddhava, or an elephant caught by the trunk by an alligator, as representing different types of spiritual love which have influenced later the whole trend of mystical speculation.

Narada in his *Bhakti Sūtra* enumerates eleven species of spiritual love as follows: (1) adoration of God's excellences; (2) the condition of an *inamorato*, love of the Lord's Beauty; (3) piety or devotion; (4) love of commemoration, e.g. the Lord's Supper in primitive Christianity; (5) to be the Lord's Servant; (6) a friend's love, of John's relation to Jesus; (7) wisely devotion, nuns as brides of Christ; (8) paternal or maternal love, e.g. the Madonna's love of the Divine Babe; (9) self-sacrificing, self-dedicating love, of crucifixion of the Flesh and death of the Old Adam; (10) love of mental absorption in the Godhead; and (11) love that bewails desertion.¹

We cannot touch even briefly the history of Indian mysticism or the various strands of metaphysical thought like the system of the Panchratra; of the psycho-physiological doctrine as represented by the Tantrik tradition; of the philosophical systems, monistic, dualistic, and so on, which have all been interwoven in the ardent personal search for the Reality through the ages. Sufficient it is to point out that spiritual emotionalism has always been a significant element in the scheme of philosophy, especially in the great philosophical systems propounded by Ramanuja, Madhva, and Vallabha. Even the system of philosophical monism founded by Sankara, which emphasised pure knowledge, brought about a synthesis or compromise between mystical emotion and the absolutist scheme. Indeed, the experimental tendency of worshipping a personal God has been far too strong in India through the ages to enable an unmystical philosophical movement to survive.

RELIGIOUS EXPERIMENTALISTS AND PIONEERS.—All the different types of love for a personal God which Narada described long ago have been exemplified through the ages in the lives of innumerable mystics and saints who still

¹ See, *Comparative Studies in Vedāntism and Christianity*, p. 58.

keep alive a living tradition of Divine love, sometimes unalloyed by philosophical thought, sometimes moving hand in hand with both philosophy as well as service to fellow creatures. Nor are these peculiar to India. Every country and every religion have men who make experiments, sometimes daring, indeed, with the Reality, and many such experiments choose the path of delicate and deep emotions and feelings.

ANALYSIS OF EMOTIONAL MYSTICISM.—Emotional mysticism, indeed, comes out of a universal need of inner adjustment. All men suffer strain due to certain instinctive inhibitions or denials. These might be due to congenital defect, disease, or accident, or to the social or personal situation. The effect of such inhibitions or denials is to block the channels of man's motor responses which represent the routes of vital adaptation. For this deprivation man tries to compensate himself by his own fancies, dreams, and myths, which are intended to maintain the adaptive behaviour in spite of its failures in real life.

Sometimes these images come at random and in pell-mell fashion and have no particular significance for the individual. We then call such creations illusions or hallucinations. Sometimes, again, these images are well co-ordinated in mind, and then we have moral, æsthetic, and religious attitudes developing. A medley of images, shifting in a haphazard succession and intervening in daily life and intercourse, is characteristic of a man who is without mental equipoise or is a religious fanatic. On the other hand, when such images are organised into complex patterns as a result of the blending of all the impulses and interests, these engender ideas of beauty, immutability, and all-comprehensiveness. These become objects of æsthetic appreciation and worship, and also mould man's moral and social attitudes. With the mystic such images are not appearances but objective realities. For as meditation quickens there comes a detachment, an over-stepping of the consciousness beyond the bounds of space and time. Thus the objects or sensible representations are endowed with a sense of holiness and majesty and then elicit a variety of kinæsthetic sensations and feelings. And since motor phenomena in the direction of high tension are most evident

when a living being is present, such intense tension and emotion produce a vivid sense of the divine presence. Meditation, however, comes to its own when the sense of the presence of a Personal God eliciting a variety of incipient responses and emotions is gradually supplanted by an intellectual vision. Gradually the emotions, images, and concepts disappear; only an awareness of their meaning lingers, a profound intuition of God's infinity and mystery. Dreams and reveries, as well as representations and symbols of art and religion, are all biologic defences that man's nature sets up to counteract the effects of individual idiosyncrasy or accident or the repressions of the social milieu. The frequency of hysteria, suicide, and insanity indicates the failure of such defence formations to achieve and maintain adaptive behaviour. The success of such defence formations consummates itself in the ideal creations of the poet, the artist, and, above all, the mystic. Such religious emotions are unconsciously modified by the social environment and tradition. And, indeed, the mystic who participates in social life, and does not break away from the social ties, is the usual and normal type, and develops a certain permanent organised attitude which is the only one consistent with this group life and behaviour.

MAN'S APPROACHES TO GOD AND THEIR SOCIAL REACTIONS.—There are sensitive natures in every age or country, who in the pursuit of Reality want to escape from the strenuous process of adjustment, that man's behaviouristic relation to his milieu normally demands. There are many who adopt habits of plain living, take the vow of silence, or retreat themselves to solitude in order to cut themselves off from the channels of reciprocal behaviour and conserve the organic energy for the purposes of spiritual effort as far as possible. For such persons the inner adjustment is brought about by the creation of images and symbols; the overt motor responses in relation to the environment which, normally speaking, bring home the sense of life, becoming incipient. These images and symbols become an expression of human nature itself, fashioned by its normal impulses and interests, and these are possessed of an extraordinary vitality and restore health and vigour to the body.

All the impulses and interests aroused in the responses to human beings emerge singly or collectively in the connection between the mystic and his God, and we have different emotional approaches to Him. The domination of one emotion or the blending of several emotions must be characterized by both harmony and stability in order that these may crystallize into a religious attitude. Where the sex impulse dominates, it colours the religious attitude, whence the sentiment between mother and child or between master and servant is excluded. Later, when the mystic outgrows amorous interest, the relation between son and mother may supersede erotic sentiments and the new religious attitude will be coloured by emotions of reverence and submission. There is thus an evolution of man's religious attitudes which corresponds to the evolution of man's groups and values. The key to social evolution and cultural progress is furnished by the fact that man builds up a harmonious system of sentiments and relationships. With the change in instinctive dispositions that runs parallel with group organization and culture, there is accordingly a change in religious attitude, so that the sentiments allow of co-operation and a harmonious fusion. It is thus that the religious life, which plays the dominant rôle in organising permanent attitudes, weaves the pattern of social bonds. The different kinds of allegiance which religion inculcates play a significant part in the development of social organization. Such loyalties are not the result of natural impulses, but of a complex scheme of social and cultural reactions, and these represent modes of man's both inner and outer adjustment. Nowhere have the types of religious attitude been so clearly demarcated and appraised as in the memorable conversation between Chaitanya, the mystic religious preacher of Bengal of the sixteenth century, and Ramananda Roy on the banks of the Godavari during the former's evangelical tour in Southern India.

APPROACHES TO GOD ENLIGHTENED BY HUMAN MYSTICS —
 "How can the Divinity be reached?" interrogates Chaitanya himself.

"If we stick to duties relative to one's social group and stage in ethical discipline," answers Ramananda Roy in the inspiration of divine insight.

"This is merely external; please go on."

"To surrender all activity to God is the best mode of attaining the Reality."

"This, too, is external; go on."

"The surrender of everything to God is the best way."

"But this, too, is external."

"Love with full consciousness of the Reality is the best."

"This also is external."

"Love without endeavouring to be conscious of the Reality is the best."

"Well, this is one way. speak about another."

"Devotion from affection is the essence of Religion."

"Yes, this is another; speak yet more."

"Loyalty towards Him as a servant is the best way."

"Yes, this is another. Speak again."

"Loyalty towards Him as a friend and companion."

"Yes, this is good. Speak again."

"Eternal tenderness is the best way."

"This also is good—speak again."

"The love of the spouse for her Lord is the cream of religion."

"Yes, this is certainly the best of human endeavour; but pray tell me if there is anything yet further."

"I did not expect anybody to ask further. But I tell you now that the love of Radha is the quintessence of human effort, whose glory is testified by all religious literature."

The various approaches to God mentioned here cover all human endeavours towards obtaining the Reality, and in so far as they include degrees of mystical contemplation they are significant in a comparative study of the motivation and methods of mysticism.

MYSTICISM, A UNIVERSAL HUMAN SAFEGUARD—Mysticism is not the monopoly of a particular religion or the concern of particular individuals. Mysticism is a world-wide experience, and the stages and degrees of mystical contemplation reached in different religions by different persons are as uniform as, for instance, the psychological laws of perception and feeling which govern human consciousness irrespective of country or race. Indeed, every one can and ought to be a mystic unless he allows his mind to be completely overcome in the process of his adjustment to the environment. We have already seen that it is mysticism, through art and religion, which brings about an equipoise or balance when there is an undue strain in the inner adjustment. Indeed mysticism ought to be regarded as the only safeguard against strain or loss of balance due to the inevitably partial or incomplete fulfilment of man's urges and interests. It has, therefore, its roots in the imperative necessity of man's adaptation to the environment.

MYSTICISM VERSUS ASCETICISM.—That spiritual love releases undue strain is beautifully expressed by Elkanath, an Indian mystic of the sixteenth century in the course of his elucidation of the doctrine of spiritual emotions :—

"Though one restrain the senses, yet are they not restrained.

"Though one renounce sensual desires, yet are they not renounced.

"Again and again they return to torment me. For that reason the flame of God's love was lit by religion.

"There is no need to suppress the senses, sense of sensual pleasure ceases of itself. So mighty is the power that has in God's love. Know this assuredly, O firm among Kings.

"The senses that ascetics suppress, mystics devote to the worship of the Lord. The things of sense that the ascetics forsake, mystics offer to God. Ascetics forsake the things of sense, and, forsaking them, they suffer in the flesh, the followers of mysticism offer them to the Lord, and hence they become for ever emancipated.

"With child, dove, self, offer them to the Lord. In this, above all else, does worship consist."

LOYALTY IN RELATIONSHIP TO GOD.—Mysticism thus confers a joy due to the satisfaction of the elemental urges of human nature which are denied in a particular situation. It is in the intimacies of relationship with a personal divinity that persons satisfy instincts of self-assertion, sex, or paternal impulses, and develop a loyalty which Professor Royce describes as a principle fit to be made the basis of a universal moral code. The spirit of true loyalty is of its very essence a complete synthesis of the moral and of the religious interests.¹ Now this loyalty springs from different relations between God and the mystic, such, for instance, as when the mystic regards himself as God's servant, as God's friend or comrade, as God's son, or, again, as God's elect bride; and therefore results in his different ethical attitudes towards society and the environment. And, indeed, this loyalty entails a gradual organization of the emotions so that there is less psychic conflict, and man develops a permanent organized attitude which is most in keeping with his social behaviour. In this manner any danger that an emotional abandon may preclude social obligations is avoided.

All religions emphasize different kinds of loyalty; and historical traditions, myths, or legends give direction and aim to such loyalties. In Christianity, for instance, the

¹ Royce, *Source of Religious Insight*

supreme sacrifice of Christ for humanity directs the mystic's rapturous union with Him into a fruitful and self-sacrificing love for fellow-men. "The main doctrines of Christianity," as Dean Inge observes, "—the resurrection and ascent of Christ on God's right hand, the future life, the abodes of joy and sorrow, the sacrament—are all pictorial and symbolical," eliciting charity and love. In the Mahayāna Buddhism the all-embracing compassion of the Eternal Buddha which diffuses and comprehends all creatures and things, serves as the incentive for a life of enlightenment, love, and indefatigable devotion. In Hinduism, Hanuman's ideal of supreme moral purity and chastity, and self-forgetful service to God for the sake of service, transforms a blind egoistic rapture into dedication for the service of humanity. This has been the ideal of worship through the attitude of God's chosen servant amongst such mystics as Tulsidas, who have a wide following throughout Northern India. There is a familiar saying of Tulsidas as follows: "A servant of God is greater than God Himself." Nothing could better satisfy man's fundamental tendency of self-affirmation than this, and yet this would be directed towards moral perfection and service towards humanity. Imbued with the spirit of humanism is the following story about Hanuman:—

"A wretched scavenger, in the grip of pathetic distress, lay in foul sith crying, 'Ah, God! God!' Hanuman, flying by, angrily kicked the sufferer on the breast. That night as he sharpened the God's body, he was horrified to find a dreadful wound in the same place. How had it happened? 'You kicked a poor man on the breast,' explained God, 'as he called upon my name, and what you did to the victim of my children you did to me.'"

Hanuman might have been a totemic deity worshipped by the aboriginal inhabitants of India: but, as the apotheosis of moral purity, energy, and self-surrender, as he is described to be by Valmiki and Tulsidas, he is at once a bridge between Aryanism and Dravidian culture, and a symbol of a most ethical type of theistic worship among millions of people in Northern India. His master, the incarnate Ram Chandra, whose modern worship in India began with the teaching of Ramanuja and was spread over Northern India by Ramananda and his followers, represents the ideal of all

social virtues which India holds dear. Humility and loving obedience to parents, supreme brotherly love, the most tender devotion to wife, unflinching truthfulness, equanimity amidst adversity: these are only some of the qualities which have made Sri Ram Chandra the highest ideal through the ages. To Sri Ram Chandra, incarnation of God, and a king, compassion had no bounds: for did he not clasp the poor and lowly fisherman to his bosom, taste the half-eaten sour plums offered in devotion by a non-Aryan forest woman, and deign to take the brother of his inveterate enemy to his arms? Thus the cult of Ram Chandra held before the worshipper a divine life instinct with human sympathy, sanctifying his heart and throwing open its flood-gates of benevolence and charity. Similarly in the south, for the mystical worshipper of Siva, the God has drunk the poison of man's sin and suffering in order that he may be redeemed, and has thus become blue-throated ever after. Thus Manikavasagar sings:—

"Thou need'st no
Thine: dost fiery poison eat, quenching poor souls,
That I might thine ambrosia taste—I, meanest one."

The ancient legend is that a draught of deadly poison emerged from the ocean as it was being churned by the gods and the demons; Siva took and drank the bitter poison lest it should destroy the world. The mystic utilizes the episode for illustrating divine grace and mercy.

KRISHNA, THE GOD-COMPANION OF MAN.—It is, however, in the Krishna cult that the grace of God makes the most passionate emotional appeal. Krishna descends heaven to create a new heaven on earth for man, in the villages and pasture-lands on the banks of the Jamna, where he shares the joys and sorrows of the pastoral folk, living and suffering like a man amongst men. The whole tradition is as ancient as the *Bhagavata Purana*, which, in fact, has contributed to Indian thought the idea of a God of Grace. But this idea has been elaborated both by later philosophy and mysticism, and in different schools of Vaishnavism it has kept alive a rich tradition of ardent religious experimentation.

The whole life of God on earth has served as the basis of an analysis of different religious attitudes and their dominant

impulses. God as the son is fondly nursed by His earthly mother, who can brook no long separation as he goes out with the village boys to tend cattle in distant pastures. The Boy makes sport with her infinite tenderness. He invites her outstretched arms only to elude her loving embrace. He steals butter from her pantry, trembles with fear and accepts her punishment like an ordinary boy; but, God as He is, He often strikes awe and wonder in her heart by showing her now and again a miracle, or standing with mouth agape to exhibit a hundred worlds within. Paternal tenderness is one of the strongest impulses, and in and through God's relation with His earthly mother this impulse becomes a bridge to spiritual love. As the companion of the cowherds, God is their friend, philosopher, and guide. He takes part in a hundred mischievous pranks all for their joy, shares their frugal fare, and hard toil, and shows, like them, infinite tenderness for the cattle under their charge. He is, in fact, the lost companion a man calls to for help when danger threatens. God as the never-failing Friend satisfies the gregarious human animal's eternal hunger to find its herd and herd-leader.¹

It is, however, as the human lover that God excites the most tender emotions. Nothing can show God's grace more than that He pines for man, His chosen bride, whose worldliness and pride refuse to surrender to the soft alluring melodies of the flute of a reed ever resounding since man's separation from God. God lays aside all His godliness in order to win over man; He tries all the arts and wiles which an elaborate Indian science of profane love has discovered. The climax is reached when we read in Jaiyān's *Gita Govinda* ■ God enjoining man by saying: "Oh Thou! Surrender to Me thy generous lotus feet!"

The episodes in the life of God, now fondly clinging to the tender bosom of His mother, now running away to avoid her wrath, now crossing hill and dale in loving unison with the herd of friends and cattle, now playing on his flute to decoy His chosen bride from her daily round of duties, now disappearing suddenly and making His bride suffer more than her heart can bear, now returning to her in the solitary bower, and now suffering from the taunts of her

¹ Cf. Gilbert Murray's *The Story of Philosophy*, p. 41.

companions : all these represent varied religious moods and attitudes, which the mystic deliberately seeks in order to find his vision of God and to enrich his spiritual consciousness.

PHENOMENON OF COMMUNION—REALITY OF MYSTICAL VISION.—The mystic chooses different emotional approaches to God as described above, the attitude of calm resignation, of consecrated service, of loving companionship, of paternal tenderness, or of passionate conjugal love ; or, rather, his particular attitude towards God expresses the fundamental needs of his own nature. Whilst he empties his subconsciousness perhaps another attitude comes easily, and thus the desires of heaven are but means for the fulfilment of his balked desires and interests. It is to these that his incipient responses are directed. Since men come in touch with physical objects only through their responses, their adaptive behaviour in relation to his symbols and ideal constructions bring home to them the sense of their physical presence. Gods and angels, and their friends and companions, like their adversaries, such as demons and spirits, thus make their presence felt, and these change their mood or behaviour to suit the impulses and interests that have created them. This is the phenomenon of communion, in which the mystic is convinced of an impressive Presence, more concretely real than what his eyes see, his ears hear, or his hands touch. Foucault refers to this experience as follows :—

"There is a profound difference between thinking of a person and feeling him near us, and so when we feel that some one is near us, we say that we have an experiential knowledge of his presence. In the mystic state, God is not satisfied merely to help us to think of Him, and to remind us of His presence. In a word, He makes us feel that we really enter into communion with Him."

Now the difference between religious communion and dream or reverie, which similarly proceed from man's satisfaction in an ideal world of fundamental tendencies of human nature, such as self-assertion, the needs for paternal fondness, for affection, and love, etc., is that divine Beings blend together as large a number of impulses as possible and hence are more stable and recur much oftener. Thus the mystic exhibits an organized or stable system of behaviour. This is made easier by the fact that the mystic concentrates

his attention on the religious object or its attributes, and with effort directs all his impulses and interests along one channel. For this reason the object of worship not only gives greater consolation and joy, but also it reveals itself to the consciousness with much greater beauty and power than, for instance, the figures in a day-dream or reverie, and hence the sense of its presence is more overwhelming. While the dream or reverie spins out in an endless series of images, thoughts, and feelings, eluding behaviour without order or stability, the mystic's vision is composed of more or less stable realities, which are true, good, and beautiful, engendering certain permanent attitudes. We have already seen that such stable attitudes exhibited in the diverse relations of the mystic to God as, for instance, His son, His servant, His comrade, or, again, as His chosen bride, organise all his emotions and sentiments into an harmonious pattern, and therefore his family, his kindred, his group come to possess a rich spiritual interest and significance for him. The various emotional approaches to God engender the romance and spirituality of motherhood, fatherhood, comradeship, or sex, and weave in fine and delicate texture the pattern of the social bonds. Religion accordingly becomes a search for the very substance of values, which have significance not merely for the mystic's own joy and complete living, but also for the world of man. The *Mahatmyas Tantra* frankly declares :—

"The images of God conceived by the mind are as hapless in securing one's salvation as a kingdom obtained in dream is in securing for him the kingdom. Those who worship earthen, wooden, or stone images as gods labour in vain, as without knowledge of His truly salvific cannot be obtained."

When the centre of mysticism is an ideal realised in a person, such as a supreme historic figure like Christ or the Buddha, or a semi-historical figure like Ram Chandra or Krishna portrayed as spies and legends full of ethical purpose, man's loyalty to God also binds him to the service of God in the world. Thus God not only vivifies the mystic's heart and satisfies his subconscious desires, giving him a peace that passeth all understanding, but He serves also to establish anew man's kinship with fellow-man and the forces of Nature,

Such a life is possible only with strenuous effort. Indeed, the mystic consciously and deliberately seeks an experience of ultimate values, and it is his sense of difference between different kinds of values which rescues society from mal-adjustment and conflict of attitudes. It is the mystic who lives a most self-conscious life, and it is his synthesis of ends and purposes on an ideal plane which brings about social harmony and consequently is an essential condition of the stability and complex evolution of society.

VALUE OF EMOTIONAL MYSTICISM.—A religion of feeling through ecstatic experiences which represent religion in its most acute, intense, and living stage offers a far better solution of the life of life than philosophy and metaphysics. The infinite worth of Man is stressed and, what is more, man moves fellow-men as objects of their worship. Man achieves a cosmic gregariousness and life is regarded as a cosmic drama of loving finite spirits all reciprocating in their mutual relation the infinite love of God. It is well-known how the ancient monistic philosophy of the Vedanta was transformed in India by religious mysticism, which laid stress upon a community of souls in the unity of the absolute life. The monistic position was not entirely given up. It was maintained that God is infinite and at the same time a Person; but the limitation of personality does not apply to the case of God, whose infinitude of power can be felt by every finite being. Love demands a sympathetic and synthetic response. Thus the finite being is as much a requirement for God as God for the finite being. This idea is neatly expressed in a popular Bengali song, which reiterates that there is no salvation, because Love sees the equal reality and necessity of both the Divine and the finite, and holds the two in sweet, eternal communion. Rabindranath Tagore has translated the song as follows —

"It goes on blossoming far ages, the soul lotus, in which I am bound, as well as thou, without escape. There is no end to the opening of its petals, and the honey in it has such sweetness that thou, like an intoxicated bee, canst never desert it, and therefore thou art bound, and I am, and liberation is nowhere."

"And so," beautifully says another medieval Indian mystic, "the eye is feasted with colour, the ear with music, the palate with sweets wondrously provided. And we find that the body longs for the Spirit, the Spirit for the body, the flower for the socket,

the secret for the flower ; our words for Truth, the Truth for words ;
shown for its ideal, the ideal for them ; all this mutual worship is
but the worship of the ineffable Reality behind, by whose presence
every one of them is glorified. And Dada struggles not, but simply
keeps his heart open to this shower of love, and thus rejoices in
perpetual spring time. " 2

² Translation by Kollbrunner Sam.

CHAPTER XII

CLASSIFICATION OF MYSTICAL ATTITUDES

RAPTURES OF RELIGION.—The whole life and existence of the mystic is an endlessly progressive search in his being and his environment for Reality. The contrast between himself and the Real Self is the symptom of his grasp of Truth. As he integrates by a ceaseless process of mental adjustment the boundless multiplicity and variety of parts of the universe into a single and singular whole, he apprehends Beauty. But he is no passive spectator. Though he completely detaches himself from finite aims and worldly ambitions, he participates in the full and abundant life of the universe in communion with all. Where the mystic perceives the unity of all existence and action in the Divine, it becomes to him the substance of Goodness. Finally, where the Divine integrates and augments his impulses and desires, it becomes to him the substance of Joy. It is for this reason that in the *Upanishads* Reality and Joy are regarded as one. The *Upanishad* says: "From Him come back baffled both words and mind. But he who realises the joy of Brahman is free from fear." Indeed, the search of God as the All-joyous is traditional in India, but it is the *Bhakti-marga* or the path of affection which has stressed this aspect most. Narada, in his *Bhakti-Sutra*, says "By knowing the Reality one attains perfect quietude and joy of mind." All the mystical experiences have found God as the substance of Joy and Beauty, and in mystic revelations which speak of the presence of God we find His beauty always described in superlative terms, which yet fail to satisfy the mystic. Chaitanya, speaking of the beauty of Krishna, says that a particle from it inundates the three universes and forcibly draws to it every creature. It is well known that the great mystic fell most frequently into sweet raptures which continued for long intervals, and in his awakening he spread joy all around. Jambhata describes a rapturous communion with God as follows.—

"My heart was filled with love at his touch,

"My ear was filled by the music of his voice; the sweet scent of kumkum, sandal, and incense emanated from his person, and, as I touched it, my hand recoiled in joy. Awakened to physical consciousness I lost the divine touch."

St. Teresa preferred that her intoxicating experiences, which gave her the most intense pleasure, should not be long continued:

"The situation which pleasure possesses for us is so keen that God has bountifully given to the soul a taste of these spiritual delights than she entirely surrenders herself to them. She would remain as it were motionless in order not to disturb the sweet experience; for nothing in the world would she want to lose it. It would be better to use in the active service of God the long hours spent in this sort of absorption."

In the literature of the Yoga system this experience is described as the illumination of multi-million suns and the tender calmness of multi-million moons.

CLASSIFICATION OF RELIGIOUS EMOTIONS.—In the mystical consciousness Beauty and Love are one. Now the religious emotion aroused by the object of worship is governed by the emotional attitude characteristic of the worshipper. These we have already described as approaches of self-abasement, gregariousness, parental, and man-woman love. In India an attempt towards a scientific classification of religious emotions and attitudes was made. We have not only a distinction between dominant and incipient desires, but also a regular hierarchy of such desires so far as they represent ascending grades for reaching the Reality. We have, moreover, an analysis of images and symbols, in so far as they elicit religious emotions directly or indirectly.

The religious attitude depends upon the dominant impulse during the meditation. This is regarded as an abstract entity, apart from the person experiencing it. We have already classified such dominant impulses:—

1. Renunciation (*prāptir bhāva*).
2. Obedience (*dāya bhāva*).
3. Friendship (*sāthya bhāva*).
4. Tender fondness (*ratna bhāva*).
5. Passionate love (*rati bhāva*).

Each of these impulses, whether accompanied by an accessory emotion (*vyākṣhīrī* or *samāhīrī*) or not, produces

a corresponding attitude (*raas*) is the worshipper. These attitudes in an ascending order of intensity of impulses are :—

1. The resigned attitude (*abhis bhāva*). This implies the cultivation of unwavering faith in God.
2. The obedient attitude of a servant (*dāya raas*). This implies devoted service.
3. The attitude of a comrade (*sakhya raas*). This implies a contract of friendship with God on equal terms.
4. The paternal attitude (*pitṛaśya raas*). This implies self-sacrificing and tender devotion.
5. The passionate attitude of a lover (*prema raas* or *mādhurya raas*). This is the highest attitude and is called the *raas-raje* or the *affected raas*. It implies a complete self-surrender to God.

Of all these attitudes those of obedience and passionate longing are more significant. No worship can disregard the *dāya bhāva*; the spirit of complete humility must always be there. Even the appreciation of God as beauty and love cannot exclude altogether the sense of reverence. Ghazali, referring to a reverent attitude of mind, observes :—

“Some hold that fear is opposed to love, but the truth is that just as the conception of beauty generates love, the knowledge of His sublime majesty produces the feeling of awe in us. Some Sufis say that he who worships God without fear is liable to err and fall; he who worships Him with fear seems gloomy and is cast off, but he who loving worships Him with hope and fear is admitted by Him and favoured. Therefore lovers should fear Him and those who fear Him should love Him. Even excess of His love contains an inkling of fear; it is like salt in food. For human nature cannot bear the white heat of His love, if it is not chartered and tempered by the fear of the Lord.”¹

In the four attitudes, resignation, obedience, companionship, and parental devotion, consciousness yet maintains itself. It is only in the case of the passionate man-woman relation that the mystic's consciousness is completely resolved. In the Hindu scheme, accordingly, the attitude to God as of a woman communing with her beloved is regarded as at once the most ardent and the highest.

THREE STAGES OF LOVE OF GOD.—This passionate

religious attitude (the woman-to-man attitude or *rati*) is described as the furthest desire of the mind for the object to which it has an affinity. It may itself be classified into three stages or types arranged in a descending order to emotional force and inwardness.

1. The annihilation of consciousness of the human lover in the everlastingness of God's love (*ananta*). Love here has no flux, but is a constant abundant outpouring of the soul. This love has affinity to honey, which is sweet by itself, makes other things sweet, and flows of its own accord. It is also compared with the *mañjusha* dye, which is bright by itself, is permanent, and does not require any other dye to set it off.

2. Mutual action and interaction between God's desire and man's (*samangama*). Here the self remains, and hence love is subject to ebb and flow due to divine grace. This love bears affinity to clarified butter (*ghaṭ*), which is agreeable only when it is mixed with suitable food. Love here depends upon the grace of God. It is compared with the *kumudika* dye, which gives the colour quickly but depends for its permanence and brightness upon other dyes.

3. The love of God which has reference to Self (*radharana*). It is compared with lac, which is naturally hard but becomes soft when it is brought near fire. Love is here of the familiar type, and depends upon the proximity of God. It is also compared with the yellow colour of the *śiśiaka* flower, which fades when the flower is left over for the night.

The three types of love arouse quite distinct attitudes of God towards the worshipper. In the first type God is ever new, very youthful and sportive, yet undisturbed by the desires of the worshipper (*dhīra-kāṭi*). In the second type God shows antithetic attitudes, sometimes merciful, sometimes wrathful (*dhīra-odhīra*); sometimes stable, sometimes fleeting. In the third type God shows himself in his worldliness and disquiet. This is the initial stage in which the worshipper prays to God for worldly prosperity. It is thus that the stage of the unification of self with God not merely determines the mystic's religious motive, but also the stability of the object of worship.

EXCITANTS OF RELIGION.—In the Hindu psychology of

religion every religious attitude has an "exciting cause" or "excitant" (*vibhūṣa*) in order to induce the experience from the underlying dominant emotion, and such excitants may be either "essential" (*śāśvata*) or "enhancing" (*uddīpaka*). The absolutely essential excitant is the object towards which the underlying dominant emotion of resignation, obedience, passionate love, etc., is directed, i.e. God. Such an excitant is called "absolutely essential" (*śāśvatavibhūṣa*). But an excitant may be "relatively essential" (*avayavavibhūṣa*). It then elicits an attitude whose dominant emotion is not immediately directed to God.¹ Such, for instance, is Radha, the beloved of Krishna. She can be the relatively essential excitant of the attitude of passionate love, i.e. she causes the subjective attitude to arise in the heart of the worshipper from the corresponding dominant emotion considered as an objective abstract entity. This ultimately leads to the attitude of passionate love directed to her Lover, Krishna, who is the absolutely essential excitant. A similar excitant is the Madonna, who can induce an attitude of maternal tenderness in the mystic's heart for the only begotten Son of God. An enhancing excitant is such an excitant as the qualities of behaviour of any of the essential excitants. Such, for instance, is Krishna's complete surrender to those who seek Him as the only refuge, or love Him without desire.

In a memorable passage in *Chaitanya Charitamrita*, one of the most mystical in any literature, the great mystic, overpowered by Ramananda's ardent discussion of the stages of mystical consciousness, confided to the kindred soul that his love for God, indirectly induced by Radha's supreme love, had given him the form and beauty of both Radha and Krishna in one. The raptures of union between Radha and Krishna which the mystic experienced wrought a marvellous transformation of his physical form, and Ramananda fainted at sight of the master's spiritual metamorphosis. It is similarly said that St. Francis's vision of the crucifixion induced nail-marks in his hands and feet, revealing his inner spirit. St. Catherine of Siena in like manner manifested the wounds of the body of Christ. Other Christian mystics have shown the marks of Christ's chastisement, the weight of the cross

¹ See Guenther's article on "Bhakti-sarga" in the *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*.

on the shoulder or the crown of the head.¹ Hindu Yogis also show signs of a small mound in the centre of the forehead, mark of the divine wisdom. But the experience that most strikingly resembles the mystical transformation of Chaitanya into the effulgent form of Radha, the beloved of Krishna, is the mystical pregnancy of some women mystics in Europe, who were not mental cases at all. Not rarely did they perceive the stirrings in the womb (as if a thousand babies were to issue from it) and the fullness of the breasts, but they also felt the tenderness of holding the divine Babe and "the chaste emotion of a virginal suckling". In such cases the frontiers between love and maternal sentiments were somewhat indistinct, but the physical changes were profound, these being regarded, as in Chaitanya's case, "not as symbols or visions of the soul; they are phenomena actually experienced by the physical and moral being." So observed Mme Bruyère, abbess of Solesmes, about her spiritual maternity. Modern psychologists attribute such effects to the influence of suggestion and the working of the subconscious, explaining them by the motor and secretive effect of the images and symbols used in intensive meditation. The stigmata of the Christian mystics are compared by some to the secretive and cutaneous abnormalities of certain neuropaths (bloody sweat on the forehead or spontaneous formation of bruises after a nervous crisis). Religious emotions are like all other feelings in that they cannot be transferred by a direct process. Thus the slowness or excitants of such feelings have a great significance in every religion. They may be sense-perceptions as well as symbols of thought, and they operate by arousing neural and moral processes having their attendant affective qualities. Professor Ames remarks:—

"The refinement and cultivation of the emotional nature must necessarily be accomplished indirectly by the control of the attention and by directing it to the symbols and models of ideal forms of conduct, and by securing the natural expression of such direction of attention into its appropriate activities."

The mystics, indeed, care little for the visible and internal marks, but these represent to them a moral and spiritual transfiguration, a divine favour indicating their full participation in the joy of the Divine Lover, a Virgin Mother, or the agony of the Crucified Christ.

¹ Bastide, *The Mystical Life*, pp. 121-22, 214-15.

■ Ignatius Loyola's *Spiritual Exercises* we find that the life, passion, death, and resurrection of Christ are reviewed in the mind and made as vivid as possible in imagination, so as to induce the corresponding emotions and aspirations. Thus the subject imagines usually Christ or the Virgin in some definite place and time in their lives. He makes a petition to God, appropriate to the event visualized, such as that one may be joyful if the person has imagined the Resurrection, that he may feel shame and confusion for his sins if he has imagined the Passion, etc. Lastly he imagines Christ upon the Cross, and makes to Him a colloquy, addressing Him "just as one friend speaks to another, or a servant to his master", and reviewing how "He has come to make Himself man . . . and so to die for my sins", and "looking at myself" to "consider what I have done for Christ, what I ought to do for Christ, and so, seeing Him in such condition fastened on the Cross, to think over what shall occur".¹

EXAMPLES OF RELIGIOUS EXCITANTS.—In Christianity the supreme symbol which has excited religious pity through the ages has been the image of Jesus Christ set on the Cross, deserted and betrayed, suffering and yet smiling at the raillery of the mob. Stanley Hall describes the effect of such an emblem as follows:—

"All these events, especially amplified in detail, act in some by the most realistic imagination until it cooed out with an almost scorching and sometimes actually stigmatised affect in the psychophysical organism of the believer, agreed as nothing else has ever done to the sentiments of sympathy and pity, the foundations of which strike to the very roots of man's gregarious nature."

The dominant feeling of pity sought to be aroused by the symbol of the Cross is enhanced by Christ's prayer: "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do." Thus Jesus' cherishing of his persecutors may be described as *addipana*, or enhancing existent of the religious feeling.

In Hinduism the household duty is worshipped in intervals during the day by a series of rituals and ceremonial observances which arouse motor processes in any person concentrating his mind upon the service and executing the elaborate ritual which sustains imagination. The God, for instance, has to be awakened from His sleep, nourished,

¹ Quoted in Wright, *A Student's Philosophy of Religion*, p. 298

bathed, clothed, and given food at intervals with pomp and ceremony, and the life-like-ness and sense of reality with which the service (*sewa*) is performed by the household priest or the head of the family set up neural and motor processes with their attendant religious feelings. Much more complex are the thought symbols of Vaishnavism, which, through the help of music and poetry, dramatize vividly the mutual relations of Radha and Krishna, and elicit an infinite tenderness and yearning for God.

There is, for instance, the familiar figure of Radha in the religious lyric, sleepless and weeping in her anguish of abandonment, but mustering all her courage to meet the Beloved One in the darkness of the night through untrodden paths, slippery after the rains and full of thorns. The picture, vividly brought home to the mind with the help of graceful language and sweet melody full of sensuous passion, cannot fail to excite disturbing motor-responses. Govinda Das sings of the tryst of Radha as follows :—

"She covers the narrow by-path that crosses her courtyard with thorns and makes them slippery with water. She ties her anklets with cloth and wears them ticking. With feet tender as lotus buds, she gently crosses the slippery and thorny path she herself made. Thus does Radha, sleepless throughout the night, wait in expectancy of thee, O Krishna. By covering her eyes with her hands she walks alone and thus learns to walk in the darkness. She offers snake-charmers her bracelets of gold, and learns from them the antidote for snake-bite. She needs not the words of her elders and replies in words that sound stronger to their ears. If her friends give her any advice, she smiles like one distraught."

Or, again, Radha is urged to go to the trysting-place on a full-moon night. Says the woman who accompanies her :—

"Knowing to-night is the full moon, I have come ; it is fitting that thou shouldst keep the tryst. The light of thy body will mingle with the moonbeams, and who will be able to distinguish between the two ? O beautiful one ! I considered in my heart and I opened my eyes and I saw there is not another maid in the world to compare with thee. Do not look upon darkness as thy friend for thy companion is the enemy of darkness. Let alone the conflict of nature ; rise and see where the Lord is waiting for thee. The maid lured to the messenger and Cupid became her guide. The poet Vidynpati says the fair maiden went to the conjunction with the Lord."

Or, again, Radha complains :—

¹ D. C. Sen, *Vaishna Vedānta*, p. 204.

"My friend, there is no end to my grief. In this full rainy season in the month of Bhādra, my house is empty. The clouds are thick, there is incessant thunder, and it is raining all over the world. My Lover is gone abroad, and cruel Cupid is shooting his keen shafts at my heart. Thunderbolts are falling by the hundred, the glad peacock is dancing pæmatically, the unpampered frogs and the moor-fowl are lifting their voices, and my heart is bursting with grief. Darkness has spread in all directions, the night is fearful, and the lines of lightning are flaming. Says Vidyapati, how wilt thou pass the days and nights without the Lord?"

In song and poetry the events of the life of Radha and Krishna are elaborately described and dramatized by the most ardent imagination. Not merely the loneliness and suffering of the human soul separated from God and God's supreme grace, but also the joys of the divine union are vividly pictured. Proceeding from song to song, the mystic rehabilitates in his imagination the refined and ideal types of religious experience, exhibits changes in the motor reactions as well as in the emotions corresponding to each kind of religious attitude. It is thus that thought symbolism plays an important part in communicating religious feeling, and in the case of a religious gathering the epidemic of feeling that is aroused in this process by mutual imitation is sometimes uncontrollable and spreads from city to city. Familiar instances of this are to be found in religious crowds in every country. Like idols and images, so also mystic letters, formulae or songs, pictures of saints, the stations of the Cross, or other ideal representations, have played no small part in concentrating attention and feeling, and thus serving to arouse characteristic religious emotions and attitudes.

Aids to Concentration.—The concentration of attention and feeling is further facilitated by passivity, which shuts out disturbing incidents, as well as by the repetition of certain formulae or sentences. A specific postural pattern, which may induce a good co-ordination and extensive relaxation, is adopted. The organization and integration of muscles into systems and acts facilitate mental effort, especially under habituation, while the eyes and sometimes the ears are shut, so as to keep out every irrelevant impression. The control of breath, too, is often resorted to in order to improve bodily passivity and mental alertness and concentration. All this is met with in most types of Eastern

mysticism. Attention is directed first to an image and then to a mental representation, to a formula or to its meaning, and the process of auto-suggestion is allowed to operate as fully and freely as possible. Thus around God, which is the centre of the formula or the meaning of the formula which expresses His attributes, all the impulses and interests of the worshipper cluster. The idea of God, His image or symbol, the formula expressive of divine attributes, the language of prayer as well as the whole process of suggestion, depend upon the instruction the worshipper has received and the religious literature and tradition that represent the raw material which the process of auto-suggestion works upon. The religious tradition of the past is too strong a force to be disregarded. Thus the mystic starts with the idea of God which is a part of his social inheritance, and by meditation transforms God from an idea into a real presence. But the gods manifest themselves in the consciousness of the mystical religionist in the form and guise familiar to his region and tradition. Christ does not appear before the worshipper of the Buddha, or the Hindu World-Mother before the worshipper of Virgin Mary. The religious emotions which dominate depend also upon the sacred literature or the historical current of religious life. The pity which the Christian mystic feels as the result of his meditation of the Cross cannot come easily to a Muhammedan mystic; the attitude of humility and complete self-surrender which characterizes the Hindu worshipper of Hanuman cannot be acquired by the worshipper of the Christian God. It is in this manner that each religion fosters some characteristic emotions and attitudes, and the mystic's experiences renew and confirm them from age to age.

UNITY OF RELIGIOUS SENTIMENT.—Yet one man's psychophysical constitution is like another's, no matter how they differ in religion and tradition. Man's original endowment of impulses sufficiently accounts for the similarity of religious emotions and tendencies among the followers of different religions or sects. As the religious object satisfies the totality of man's impulses and desires, those which are persistent and all-compelling emerge everywhere in man's worship. For instance, the worship of Madonna and the World-Mother, the infant Jesus and the infant Krishna, has

given expression to the parental desire which is a compelling urge among all peoples. The divine companionship satisfies gregariousness on the ideal plane, and therefore communion with God or with the angels in heaven is among the most familiar of religious phenomena. Similarly man's self-assertion finds complete fulfilment when he realizes that God's servant is especially favoured with God's Grace. This attitude is to be met with in most religions. Man's sex urge, which is the most regulative drive, also seeks an ideal satisfaction among the mystics of every religion. In fact, the most intense and passionate religious yearning always exhibits the man-to-woman feeling: erotic mysticism is a universal creed, and spiritual marriage is the symbol of the most intimate and loving relation between man and God among mystics almost everywhere.

ASCENT FROM THE PARTICULAR TO THE UNIVERSAL.—In spite of certain differences in the idea of God, and in feeling towards Him, which are due to current religious traditions and beliefs or to the worshipper's own psychophysical constitution or condition, there is, accordingly, a sameness of religious feelings and attitudes rooted in the depths of man's original nature. The mechanism by which the impulses influence religious states is the same among all peoples. Mysticism, as we have already seen, brings about a serenity and balance in minds distracted by inner conflict. Mysticism focalises a central idea and feeling. As the inwardness increases the idea and the feeling are gradually separated from the social, historical, and traditional context. For the ardent worshipper of the Mother there is no difference between Virgin Mary and the Mother of Gamasha; for the bride of God there is no difference if He be Christ or Krishna. Indeed, the very object of mystical experimentation is frustrated if the doctrines which the mystic has received mould his ideas and feelings in a Procrustean bed. The mystic gradually rises above doctrine or dogma, literature or sect, which furnished for him the setting of the idea and feeling which were his starting-point. As the mystic becomes completely absorbed into his central idea or feeling, the tradition of his own past and the context of his own religion disappears. Thus the higher stages of mystical experience are favourable to universal ideas, feelings, and attitudes. It is a paradox that there is

no religion for the most religious person. How beautifully has this idea been expressed by Ibn-al-Arabi:—

"My heart has become capable of every form; it is a pasture for
 gazelles and a convent for Christian monks;
 And a temple for idols, and the pilgrim's ka'm and the table of the
 Torah and the book of the Koran.
 I follow the religion of Love, whichever way his spirits take. My
 religion and my faith is the true religion."

CHAPTER XIII

STAGES OF MYSTICISM

MYSTICAL BEGINNING.—Mystical experience begins with the attitudes of resignation and obedience. Even in these initial stages the mind, by acquiring inwardness, can perceive God's presence, but not by the ordinary senses. As we have seen, this is the outcome of the inhibition of man's sensory and motor responses and the operation of incipient responses on the ideal plane. But gradually the mind reaches a higher stage of communion, moved by a more passionate yearning. This stage is represented in the following passage from the Gospel of St. John: "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth; but I have called you friends; for all things that I heard of my Father I have made known unto you." The religious consciousness, which begins with man's feeling of utter dependence and helplessness, appropriately characterised by the Indian mystic, Ramanuja, as "*kinkara*" (servant) consciousness, gradually passes into divine communion or companionship, and then into the appreciation of the beauty and love of God. The attitude of humility characteristic of mystics of all religions arises out of the contrast between the divine majesty and the worthlessness of self. But this negative judgment of inferiority and feeling of self-abasement are preceded by confidence in a more real self which keeps alive a life of devotion and disinterested effort. Thus the ground where the wall is laid at rest serves also as the starting point for fresh achievement. As the mystic is more deeply absorbed in the Divine Life, the tonic sense of self-assurance is quickened and this is accompanied by unutterable delight. The mystic appears as God's partner in the universe, the form of which is suffused by Beauty and Goodness. There develops a sense of equality and even mutual dependence. Thus the conception of God changes

from that of a cosmic ruler and regulator of man's consciousness to that of Love and Beauty with which the self comes in loving intercourse. In the ardent yearning of mystics after the inspiring Love and Beauty we have the manifestation in many religions of the man-to-woman relation which completely supersedes the sense of awe and reverence.

LATER STAGES OF MYSTICISM.—As the communion becomes still deeper, we have three distinctly marked steps :—

1. The ordinary communion (corresponding to the *Sadhana* stage in the Vaishnava Bhakti tradition), in which the consciousness is yet subjected to seasons of dryness, but is enlivened by the accidents of rapture. The gradual upwardness is marked by the surrender of self-consciousness, and placing the self under the influence of God-consciousness.

2. A more intimate communion (corresponding to the *Samajana* stage), in which the consciousness of self still remains, and raptures and visions are frequent. A medley of images and representations empties the subconscious, and at times disturbs the intimate union of the self with God. Such visions are attributed to God's grace, which is sought as a special favour. Effort gradually relaxes as long practice (*abhyas*) makes inner adjustment easy and the self becomes entirely passive. This experience is described as the sleep of the powers by St. Teresa in her autobiography.

3. A complete unification (corresponding to the *Samartha* stage) in which ecstasies and visions, auditions and odours, are gone, and the soul, yet self-conscious, finds itself constantly at one with Reality.

After this there is the final stage, in which consciousness acts as a third person, delighting itself in the unification between God and self. This stage is represented in Bengal Vaishnavism by the love of the Gopikas. Consciousness here gains far greater joy when it indirectly participates in the spectacle of union with God as a group of maidens might, when they see their beloved in the ever-new dalliance of their lover. The self is compared to the tender creeper of spiritual love, while the indirect participation of consciousness is compared to its leaves and flowers. The Chaitanya Charitamrita, following the *Gobinda Lilamrita*, adds : "The flowers and leaves gain far greater joy if they nourish themselves indirectly through the creeper."

EXPERIENCES OF SPIRITUAL UNION.—There is a reference also to eight different groves of spiritual union (*Kunjās*) which represent eight different stages marked by different colour-vision, such as those of moon, sun, lightning, blue, etc., and associated with different degrees of unification. It is well-known how many of the Christian mystics communed with Jesus or the Virgin Mary in the man-to-woman attitude. St. Teresa describes the vision of an angel who held in his hands a long golden dart tipped with fire, which he often plunged through her heart, leaving her aflame with divine love. "It was not a bodily, but a spiritual pain, although the body participated in it to a high degree. There takes place, then, between the soul and God, such a sweet love-transaction that it is impossible for me to describe what passes." Rabiya, the Sufi woman, used to go to the house-top at night and to say: "Oh God! hushed is the day's noise; with his beloved is the lover. But Thee I have for my lover, and alone with thee I joy."

Mira, also a mystic woman, the queen of Udaipur, fulfilled herself in the love of Krishna. She sings on her ardour:—

"Ah, friend, I am mad of Love, as one knows my pain
The nuptial-bed of the Lord is on the gibbet, how can I meet Him?
Who but one wounded himself can feel the pang of a wound?
Who but a jeweller can appraise a diamond?
I fly from forest to forest restless with pain,
And Mira's pain will abate only when the dark-complextioned is her
physician."

In the *Guru Granth* of the Sikhs we find the intimacy of spiritual love expressed also in terms of the earthly bride's wedding with the transcendental Lord. There is the same expectancy for the beloved which characterises the Vaisnava lyrical poetry in Bengal:—

"Flung away are we Dots Thine, O Beloved, of our own freedom and
by our own doings,
Now it is all over, I have seen all the ten directions and all the four
continents, I find no home, no rest,
I return to Thee now it is evening of my life
Through Thy saving Love, restore me once again to Thyself
What am I without you?
As useless as a cow without milk, as a branch cut off from the juice
of a tree,
Burnt be the town and the city where smothered my Beloved.
If the Beloved is not by me,
All friends and blood-relations are as death,

All my fine decorations of self, the superfluous of ornaments and robes,
of the betinted dye on my lips, the pride of my beautiful flesh, the
tints of love and language, the chimeras of emotions—all, all
is sour and unripe!

O God! Bestow on me Thy Name, unite me with Thyself!

O Beloved! Thy palms never pass away!

The evening falls, my Beloved! I fall at Thy door imploring
protection."

The vision of St. John is as follows:—

"A stately youth from Heaven led him by the hand upon a
beautiful green meadow. Then the youth brought forth a song in
his heart, so wondrous that it deprived him of all his senses because
of the excessive power of the beautiful melody, and his heart was
so full of burning love and yearning for God that it beat wildly as
if it would break, and he had to put his right hand on it in order to
control it, and tears were rolling down his cheeks." [At the same
time] "he saw the Mother with her child, the Eternal Wisdom,
against her heart, and he saw written this word, *Emmanuel*,
i.e. 'Beloved of my Heart'."

Leuba notes that Suso writes of himself in the third
person, but does not explain. The reason is that in his mystical
state his self, which is unconscious apparently, is yet aware
that it loves and enjoys the union with God as a third person.
St. Teresa experienced the same double consciousness.

"This will is doubtless corrupted with loving, but it does not
understand how it loves. As to the understanding, if it understands,
it is by a mode of activity not understood by it, and it can under-
stand nothing of that which it loves. As to me, I do not think
it understands, because, as I have said, it does not understand
itself. For the rest there is a mystery in which I get lost."

According to the Sufi mystic Al-Hujwiri, the knowledge
of the reality of unification cannot be attained without
denying the personal initiative in which knowledge and
ignorance consist. He then relates a story:—

"While Hujwiri was speaking to an audience I fell asleep and
dreamed that two angels came down from heaven and listened for
some time to his discourse. Then one said to the other: 'What this
man says is the theory of unification, not unification itself.' When
I awoke he was explaining unification. He looked at me and said:
'Oh, so-and-so, it is impossible to speak of unification, except
theoretically.'"

LOVE LANGUAGE OF MYSTICAL UNION.—The complete
mystical union achieved between man and God, which is the
ideal of mysticism in every religion, expresses itself in language
drawn from the closest form of personal relationship that we
can imagine, namely love. Even in the ancient Upanisadic

mysticism we find the relation between Self and the Over-Self expressed in terms of man-woman love. We read in the *Bṛihadaranyaka Upaniṣad*: "As a man, when embraced by a beloved wife, knows nothing that is without, nothing that is within; so this person, when embraced by the intelligent (*prajña*) self, knows nothing that is without, nothing that is within." Similarly Plotinus thus describes the soul's love of God and desire to be united with Him.

"In the higher world we find the true Beloved with whom it is possible for us to unite ourselves when we have united and held it, because it is not clothed with flesh and blood. He who has beheld this Beloved knows the truth of what I say, how the soul then receives a new life when she has gone forth to it, and comes to it and participated in it, so that in her new condition she knows that the giver of true life is beside her and she needs nothing else. Such a one knows also, however, that we must put all else away, and abide in the Beloved alone and become only it, stripping off all else that wraps us about; and hence that we must hasten to come forth from the things of this world and be wroth at the bonds which bind us in them, to the end that we may embrace the Beloved with all our soul and have no part of us left with which we do not touch God."

According to the Sūfīs, *fana* or unification signifies "the proximity to the light of lights, wherein the flame of eternal love burneth, ere it transformeth; consuming self, ere it quickeneth the lover with the embrace of union."¹ The relation to a personal God in every religion is, however, described in a more fervent language of human impulses and desires "clothed with flesh and blood" says Tukaram:—

"As the bride looks back to her mother's house
And goes, but with dragging feet,
Even so it is with my soul, O Lord,
That Thou and I may meet.
As a child cries out and is soon distressed
When its mother it cannot see,
As a fish that is taken from out the wave,
So 'am, says Tukā, with me."

More often the mystical union is affirmed in the most passionate language of man-woman love. Mysticism everywhere affirms this love, and does not tolerate its annihilation.

MYSTICAL COMMUNICATION OR GOD.—Mysticism, therefore, always raises the problem of the conflict between the feeling of immanence with the idea of transcendence. In the

mystical experience, man does not find any incompatibility between absolutism and immanence. The essence of the Absolute is Truth. Now the theologian by his intellect cannot reach the Absolute, but the mystic's heart can comprehend Him as the All-Love. God being so perceived as Love, Beauty, and Joy, He can never be regarded as a separate and exclusive personality. Christianity expresses the experience of personal communion with God in the symbol of "Christ in Us". In Him, as St. Paul says, "dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." Thus the communion becomes an intercourse between kindred spirits. Yet the distinction from God continues; for Christ, though He shares the divine nature, is yet distinguished from Him. Dean Inge says: "God is above the category of relation; and therefore in the Godhead the three Persons of the Trinity are fused."

AIMS OF MYSTICISM.—In Christian mysticism the aim of man stressed through the centuries has been to become Godlike and co-operate with God. In Sufi mysticism the aim has been first to lose oneself in the Oneness of God, and, secondly, to return to "sobriety" from "intoxication". The first state is that of *fana*, the passing away of consciousness in union with the one infinite Being. The second state is one in which the mystic recovers himself and lives in God; "he becomes endowed with divine attributes, displays the divine truth, and fulfils the divine law in the world."¹ It is the eternally active will of Allah which bridges the infinite distance between man and God. Junayd says:—

"Undeletion is that, that one should be a figure (*shakke*) in the hands of God, a figure over which His doctress pass according to He in His omnipotence determines, and that one should be sunk in the seas of His unity, self-annihilated and dead alike to the call of mankind to him and his answer to them, absorbed by the reality of the Divine unity in true proximity, and lost to sense and action, because God fulfils in him what he hath willed in him, namely, that his last state should become his first state, and that he should be as he was before he existed."

But both he and his followers prefer sobriety to intoxication. The former is described as "the death-field of men", and the latter as "the playground of children". They say that intoxication is evil, because it involves the disturbance of one's normal state and loss of sanity and self-

¹ Nicholson, *The Idea of Personality in Sufism*, pp. 14, 22, 23.

control : and, inasmuch as the principle of all things is sought either by way of annihilation or subtraction, or of effacement or affirmation, the principle of verification cannot be attained unless the seeker is sane.¹

Mysticism always seems to involve a contradiction. There subsists a strong and deep personal relation with the Mediator, such as the Son of God, the Prophet of Allah, or the Incarnation of God or with God Himself. Yet God and the mystic are not the same, for God transcends the mystic's experience. Again and again it is repeated by mystics that God is beyond existence and beyond knowledge. Ward remarks "Without an Absolute One it seems hopeless to attempt to account for, and hazardous to attempt to unify, the Many : and with such an Absolute it seems as hopeless to attempt to retain what independence and freedom the Many appear to possess." Bradley also refers to this "fundamental inconsistency in religion". Says he : "When you begin to worship the Absolute or the Universe and make it the object of religion, you, in fact, have transformed it. It has become something forthwith which is less than the Universe." On the other hand, if we banish all that is meant by the indwelling spirit of God, in its harmony and discord with the finite soul, what death and desolation take the place of living religion ! The actual experience of the mystic, however, is supra-logical and by its nature "polar" and this reconciles the logical extremes. In Christianity the conception of the many in the One signifies a relation of persons within that Unity. Both in Muhammedan and Hindu mysticism the conception of the many in the One signifies, on the other hand, the relations existing between the One Infinite Being and the manifold aspects in which it reveals itself. Such aspects are reflected in the Perfect Man or Incarnation of God, who may be regarded as a personified idea, in and through whom the divine nature makes itself known. This is also, generally speaking, the main position of Mahayāna Buddhism, which, like Hindu mysticism, attempts to conceive the Divine as at once spiritual and personal and hence presents apparent logical inconsistencies. In both Hinduism and Buddhism the mystical doctrines of the Trinity and the *Trikaya* or the three

¹ *Kashf al-Mahjūb of Al-Harāmī*, chap. xvi and p. 608.

² *Bradley, Essays on Truth and Reality*, pp. 426-427.

Bodies of the Divine, as well as symbolic interpretation, have played no small part in recasting the more abstract and monistic conception with a fervent religious attitude in which the Maker and Sustainer has become also the indwelling Life and Mind and the inspiring Love.

SCHOOLS OF INDIAN MYSTICISM.—In Hindu Bhakti schools the reality of finite selves is posited, but both finite selves and natures are dependent realities existing in the Unity. Such dependent realities as finite selves have been conceived differently in different schools of thought, which all, however, insist upon a central reference to God. According to Ramanuja the Bhagavat, identified with the Pantheos or Brahman in the Upanishads, is a Pantheos, but a personal Pantheos in whom everything that is exists, and who is endowed with every imaginable auspicious quality. Matter and finite self alike proceed from Him, and He pervades all things as their embryonism or Inward Restraint. The School of Nimbarka, while admitting that the soul and matter are distinct from the Adorable, holds that they are, nevertheless, intimately connected with Him, as its coils are connected with a serpent, or as its waves are with water. The Adorable is incomprehensible, but is manifest in the book of Nature, in which the natural objects form the letters constituting the words. The letters may be in different alphabets, although the sounds are the same, and hence the actual facts of the incarnations, or the truth or falsehood of the accounts concerning them, are of small importance, so long as we read the Divine love that lies behind them. The School of Madhva emphasises the doctrine of duality constituting the unity of the Absolute, and conceives differences originally non-existent by a category called *vishesa*. According to Vallabhacharya, the human soul is a part of the Brahman, real and eternal, and like the latter both a doer and enjoyer. Brahman, through its own will and for its sport, produces the universe from itself without undergoing the least change within itself, as the spider spins its web. The divine attributes (joy or *ananda*), which the human soul possesses, become latent through the working of the will of Brahman, and thus the soul became subject to bondage, ignorance, and desires. From the Schools of Ramanuja, Madhva, and Vallabha originated great Bhakti movements from the thirteenth century onwards

in the various parts of India. Ramanuja's influence dwindled in his birth-land to reappear with great force in Northern India. Ramananda, who was a philosophical descendant of Ramanuja, quarrelled with his spiritual teacher, and came and settled in Benares. From him sprang three great mystical schools: first the School of Tulzidas; secondly, the School of Kabir; and thirdly the School of Nabhaj. Kabir was also influenced by Sufism. Tulzidas fed his imagination on the story of the Ramayana, Nabhaj chronicled the doings of the great saint in Hindu. From the School of Madhva arose the great Bengali saint Chaitanya, who was also influenced by his predecessor saints in Bengal, Chandidas and Vidyapati. Vallabha exercised a great influence in Gujerat, and Mirzai and Naran Mehta sprang up under the influence of his teachings. Thus from the philosophical schools there arose a popular mysticism which laid stress upon the vernaculars as the media of mystical teaching.¹ The Bengal School of Vaishnavism calls itself a branch of the church founded by Madhva, but its tenets approach much more nearly those of Vallabhacharya. The prominent teacher of the Bengal School is Jiva Goswami, who develops a synthetic conception of the Absolute, which embraces the conception of Brahman, Paramatman, and Bhagavan. Bhagavan is the highest dialectic unity. Brahman and Paramatman are imperfect conceptions of such a unity. Brahman is Bhagavan in the immediacy of absolute intelligence, realized when the distinction of the subject and the object is not clearly apprehended in the Absolute, which necessarily appears as an abstract sameness. It is the first moment in spiritual consciousness. Such a consummation the wise alone can realize. It is the realization of sameness in the truth of Being, but a sameness which is only apparent and a precursor of concreteness in transcendent intuition. Identity-consciousness is thus, to Jiva Goswami, a fact and realization, so long as the concreteness of spiritual life is not in sight. The synthesis in this partial presentation is called Paramatman. The complete synthesis is reached in Bhagavan, the person, infinite in excellence and power. Such a synthetic vision is accessible to love and to love alone.

¹ See E. D. Senade's articles on "The Development of Indian Mysticism up to the Age of Jnanadeva," *Pratidita Bharata*, October and November, 1927.

UNITY OF GOD AND MAN.—With the spread of mysticism in Bengal by Chaitanya the whole conception of God's personality was profoundly modified. In the Bengal School of Vaishnavism we do not find much of the intuition of the majesty of God through knowledge. God is here all sportive delight in love and joy. In the personality of God a necessity exists, the necessity of an *other* revelation in sportive delight, a revelation which is accessible only to love. This revelation in love has a twofold character. First, God is always an associate to *sakti* (*sakti* is the principle of Delight and its essence is Love) in its infinite modifications. It is in this Unity that man can realize his unity with God. Secondly, God is not simultaneously present with *sakti* in its infinite modifications. Love at its highest manifests a dialectic movement in which fellowship is first asserted and then denied. It has a law in it to effect variations in delight and make delight more intense by constant affirmation and denial of fellowship. This is the significance of the creation of finite selves and nature in the dialectic move of God's love. God Himself cannot enjoy the delight which the *sakti* feels in giving itself up for the joy of God. Thus there is a tendency in God to feel the bliss which *sakti* and finite self actually enjoy in loving devotion and denial. It is this which appears as man's love of God. In the highest form of love that which loves receives, that which receives loves.¹ It is in this manner that the profound love experiences of the mystic have resolved the ever-present conflict between the idea of God's transcendence with the feeling of God's immanence. The mystic does not reach here a Unity which excludes all relations—the unity of the salt or of the sandrop lost in the ocean, or of the moth consumed in the flame of the candle. An essential paradox, an inevitable illogicality, disappears in the dialectic march in love.

¹ Mahendranath Datta, *Unpublished Studies in Vedānta*

CHAPTER XIV

MYSTICISM AS METHOD OF INTROSPECTION

YOGAISM.—It has been a long and historic tradition in the East to form the meditation beyond a personal God to Something above and beyond existence and being. From very ancient times the Indian mystic's endeavour to introduce harmony among his conflicting impulses and desires led him beyond heaven and hell, gods and angels, to a state achieved by introspection, where all desires resolve themselves into nothingness. Thus, along with a strong current of theistic thought, India also showed strong pantheistic and acosmic tendencies. These tendencies were early encouraged by the doctrine of kinship and sameness of the subjective soul with the Brahman, the unknown and Absolute supreme. In the *Upanishads*, where this doctrine received a mystical expression, we find that the methods of discipline and control of mind are commended strongly in the search for Brahman. The word Yoga occurs in the *Taittiriya Upanishad*, and it seems that sometimes it was theistic, sometimes it contained no theistic element at all. The *Astotsya Upanishad*, a text of the Yoga philosophy, remarks:—

"A man being possessed of will, imagination, and belief is a slave; but he who is the opposite is free. For this reason let a man stand free from will, imagination and belief; this is the sign of liberty, this is the path that leads to Brahman, this is the opening of the door, and through it he will go to the other shore of darkness. All desires are there fulfilled. And for this the sages quote a verse: 'When the five instruments of knowledge stand still together with the mind, and when the intellect does not move, that is called the highest state.'"

From the text of the *Upanishads* Yoga practices have formed an indispensable part of most philosophical and religious systems in India. Buddhism borrowed from the Yoga the stages of meditation. Indologists are of opinion that exercises of contemplation for the attainment of higher states of consciousness were of great influence at the foundation of Buddhism.¹ The Yoga has its theory as well

¹ For a summary see *Kashy, Buddhist Philosophy*, chapter vii.

as its practice. The latter has been adopted not merely by Buddhism and Jainism, but also by all later schools of asceticism. Orthodox Hinduism does not recognize any restrictions for the Yogins, who receive highest honour irrespective of their caste, tradition, or sect; while householders also initiate themselves in Yoga practice either from family teachers or from saints and ascetics. The *Bhagavad Gita* long ago pointed out the necessity of Yoga, in addition to dialectic or analytical reasoning, as a method of self-realization. The hold which the Yoga practice has upon the Indian mind depends chiefly upon the most tenacious tendency of man's nature—to resolve conflict of desires and obtain sanity. The foundation of the Yoga psychology, as formulated by Patanjali in the second century B.C., is the elimination of hindrances, which are five misconceptions, namely ignorance, egoism, attachment, aversion, and desire. Man's ignorance is the propagative seed of the above hindrances. Now such hindrances are unconscious or potential, as well as conscious or manifest; they are described as being "asleep, attenuated, dormant, intercepted, or sustained". "In the case of those who have been resolved into entities, the hindrances are dormant; for Yogins, attenuated; and in the case of those attached to objects hindrances are intercepted or sustained." Dormant desires remain potential in the mind, as it were in the condition of seed, and become manifest when they come face to face with the desired object. Desires are overpowered when man deliberately ponders their opposites. For instance, when the desire to steal emerges, man should deliberate upon the consideration of giving protection to every living creature. A desire is said to be intercepted by love. When one is in love no anger is felt, inasmuch as, when one is in love, anger does not actively move forth, and love when felt in one direction is by no means unfelt towards another object. Thus even when a desire is particularized or sustained in a given direction it remains yet strong and dormant, the root of man's pain and *karma*. "Pain either in visible or invisible life then follows." "The roots lying there will bear fruit in the forms of pleasure and pain." All this agrees well with the psychology of the *Upanishads*.

ELIMINATION OF DESIRE.—It is by analysis and medita-

tion that both desires as well as the finer forms of *samskaras* or subliminal desires can be eliminated. It is clearly recognized that the subliminal desires are most difficult to eradicate. The active desires may be attenuated by the consideration of opposite desires. Their fluctuations can be escaped by elevated contemplation until subtilised and made like burned seeds. An interesting simile is used in this connection. Coarse stains are removed by shaking; minute stains by washing; more minute by alkali. Hindrances which are sustained are attenuated by the Yoga of action; the attenuated are reduced to burned seed by elevated contemplation; the burned seed is destroyed by inverse propagation. When the mind-stuff, which is an effect, is resolved into its cause, then, and then only, the subliminal consciousness is eliminated. It is with the eradication of the subliminal consciousness that the Yogin perceives his true Self (*Atman*), which is above and beyond any fluctuations of the mental processes, conscious or unconscious.¹ Various devices are recommended. Apart from ethical conduct, reading, and the cultivation of a habit of cheerfulness, the novice is asked to acquire noble thoughts and ideals and to practise meditation with the help of a postural scheme and breath-regulation.

PHYSIOLOGICAL AIDS TO MEDITATION.—It appears that different postural patterns and rhythms of breath are intended primarily to alter the course of circulation. For an alteration in the rate of breathing and in the production of muscular tension in the different parts of the body would naturally change the normal path of circulation. Such a change would modify the rhythms of all vital functions. It would naturally also have its influence on the configuration of mental life. N. N. Sen Gupta considers that the contraction of some of the larger muscles brought about in such postures or exercises inhibits the smaller muscles. In this manner the sensory experiences that normally arise by back-stroke from these muscles are also inhibited. Hence the field of attention is freed from a multitude of distracting impressions that usually flood it. The feeling of tension from the postural scheme, however, would continue for some time to disturb the process of concentration. The distractions, however,

¹ *The Yoga System*, translated and edited by Woods.

gradually disappears through habituation. But there is a second factor in the inhibition of these tension feelings. Muscular inhibition may also be brought about by voluntary means. For instance, the patella reflexes can be inhibited by a process of relaxation of the thigh muscles. In all Yogic postures there is also a process of voluntary relaxation of some parts of the body. This process serves further to inhibit the tension feelings. We may, however, discern yet another factor operative in the attentional control along with a postural pattern. It has long been recognized that attention to any object induces a local hyperemia. With the diversion of circulation in certain parts of the body and with a local hyperemia there will be a diminution of blood supply in other parts of the brain. Hence impressions that tend to rival the fixation object would naturally be inhibited.

Again, the breathing in the Yogic exercises does not show the characteristics of the usual attention process. For the pneumogram of the attention process shows that the breathing is quick, shallow, and regular. In the Yogic meditation, however, the breathing is slow, shallow, and regular. The difference arises, according to Sen Gupta, from the fact that in the usual attention process there is always a motor preparation. In meditative concentration, on the other hand, there is muscular relaxation. Thus the rate of breathing would be slow inasmuch as it is not necessary to sustain a muscular set by a quicker rate of circulation.¹ In the elevated forms of meditative concentration, especially when the Yoga practice has considerably advanced, emotions do not appear at all. This is naturally to be expected, for slow breathing and pulse rate would be incompatible with intense organic changes, which, as we know, are correlated with emotions. Thus the regulation of breathing would alter the organic functions in general, and therefore the normal structure of mental life.

Experimental psychologists have investigated quantitatively the relations between the most frequently experienced emotions and breathing and gross bodily movement. It is found that the largest amount of breathing occurs with love, anger, and horror. The smallest amount of gross bodily

¹ The above is due to the courtesy of Dr. M. N. Sen Gupta, whose unpublished notes have been fully drawn upon.

movement occurs with hopelessness. The average breathing and movement scores are most extreme for such emotions as anger, hunger, curiosity, and amorosness; and the average scores are least extreme for sympathy, admiration, and tenderness. It is these latter which are often associated with the religious consciousness.

The attitude of confidence and removal of attention from the breathing movement through constant repetition of a mystic word or formula, as well as delayed induced respiration and tensing the thoracic and abdominal regions, are also other important factors bringing about attentional control. Physiologists have found that favourable factors for holding the breath include starting with full lungs, diverting the attention from the breathing, mental set, such as determination, and conscious or forcible expansion and contraction of the thoracic and abdominal regions. In the Hindu Yoga breathing exercises the directions are on exactly similar lines, while eating just before the practice, which has been found very unfavourable for holding the breath, is strictly forbidden. Further, two devices have been found by physiologists as favourable for holding the breath: (1) tensing the abdominal region and (2) smoothing out the breathing. In the Yoga practice the former is called *uddiyana bandha*, and is widely practised while the latter method is universally adopted. The tensing seems to be a conscious attempt to inhibit the reflex or rhythmic contractions which are felt at different times during the practice. Smoothing out the breathing is for the slow breathing group what relaxation is for the holding group.¹

ATTITUDES HELPFUL TO MEDITATION.—Along with the postural scheme and breath regulation the student of Yoga is enjoined to adopt certain attitudes which modern analytical therapy would regard as valuable. Yoga demands a relaxation or release of the body from the grip of desires and emotions as well as from all mental automatisms. The Yogin is asked to so relax his hold on the mind that emotions and ideas register themselves freely, so that the mind takes up the rôle of a spectator before whom the panorama of life unrolls itself in a bioscopic succession. There are two other requirements

¹ Vogeler and Geylford, "Inhibition and Control of Breathing," *American Journal of Psychology*, vol. xlv, 1932.

emphasised: study or aspiration, which would bring about a concentration on the one aim to the exclusion of everything else, and the cultivation of an attitude of resignation to God or acceptance of life as it exists here and now. To deal with one's own limitations on a reality basis rather than by phantasy is the further task of sublimation, which as analytical therapy has found is most helpful for the arousal and development of creative activity. Abstraction or withdrawal is also recommended, and this is regarded as the immediate precursor of conscious *samadhi*. To realise one's consciousness as able to function apart from sensory phenomena is the first step in the Yogin's meditation. The later stages consist of separating awareness from the play not merely of the emotions but also of ideas, which tend to grip on the mind through a multiplicity of words. The Yogin thus seeks his release from the domination of his own ideas, which tend to express themselves ever more and more mechanically as life goes on. When freedom from all kinds of mental automatism is secured, man achieves a unification and awareness of the self at all levels. It is then that man can co-ordinate his higher and lower mental faculties and become conscious of the hitherto subliminal activities of will or intuition. The Yogic practice as the method of attainment of awareness or alertness of will and intuition, which the majority of mankind lack, only expands the aims and technique of analytical therapy. The latter has disregarded the possibilities of carrying forward self-knowledge beyond the methods of critical analysis, and its results consequently fall far short of the mental and emotional awareness and control which the Yogin obtains through his subtler and deeper introspective experience. In the Yogic terminology the complete awareness of one's own experience including emotion, thought, will, and intuition, is identical with the realisation of *Purusha* (Personality) or reality, which according to Eastern psychology has its abode in the realm of abstract or creative thought. Mind, according to Patanjali, is "a subtle substance having spatial existence and capable of taking shape". "The mind is a link between the seer and the seen. It is the lens through which external objects are registered and also through which the seer is enabled to make himself effective in the waking consciousness. The mind

reacts both to the seer and to the seen. The seer exists as pure capacity for awareness, but appears to use the mind as means of contracting experience."² Mind thus, as the Yogi finds, is akin to any event in the phenomenal world which the self as witness must comprehend as different from itself. In a recognition of this difference lies indeed the release from illusion which is basic in the Yogic discipline. The self, completely and simultaneously aware of its manifold experiences at all levels, becomes identical with the Purusha. The Purusha is at once the source and manifestation of mind and the manifold world, at once cause and effect. It is thus a simultaneity of experience of the Whole and Perfect Self and the world as a sum of sensations manifesting the activity of mind. The Purusha and the world are indivisible experience; still it is the Purusha which empels and illumines the mind and manifests the world. In the Purusha all distinctions of atom, world and God, disappear in one simultaneous, complete experience of them all.

HINDRANCES TO MEDITATION.—According to the Vedantists there are four obstacles to the meditation, with recognition of subject and object :—

1. Mental relaxation (*lopa*);
2. Distraction (*vishoka*);
3. Unconscious urge (*kashaya*); and
4. The tasting of mental delights (*rassamada*).

1. "Mental relaxation" is the drowsiness of the mind while not resting on the Secondless Reality. In the initial stages mind should preserve a tension derived from cognition of the object of meditation, although such cognition should rest later on its finer aspects.

2. "Distraction" is the resting of the modification of the mind on something other than the Secondless Reality.

3. "Unconscious Urge" is the not resting on the Secondless Reality; due to the play of the unconscious desires or *samskâras*, even though there be no mental inactivity or distraction.

4. "The tasting of mental delights" is the experience of pleasure on the part of the mind, in the recognition of subject

² Carter, *Yoga and Western Psychology*, p. 157.

and object, while it is not resting on the Secondless Reality ; or it is the experiencing of such pleasure when about to commence meditation without the recognition of subject and object. As the barriers of time and space are transcended in the identification of mind with its object of meditation, the Whole or the Beyond, there is an elation, which is the " I am " consciousness. Then this enjoyment disappears in the supreme indifference or absence of tension of pure consciousness or super-consciousness. The absence of tension, modern psychology also tells us, corresponds to the period of greatest efficiency of attention. Pillsbury observes : " The rule is that when conditions of attention are most equivocal the sense of effort is greatest ; and that there is no relation except perhaps an inverse one between efficiency of the attention and the accompanying feelings of activity."

When the mind, free from these four hindrances, and motionless as a lamp sheltered from the wind, exists as the detached Persistence only, then is realized that which is called meditation without recognition of subject and object.

It has been said : " When the mind has fallen into a state of inactivity, one should arouse it ; when it is distracted, one should render it quiescent (by turning away from the objects of sense, etc.) ; when it is affected by passion, one should realise the fact ; when quiescent one should not disturb it. One should experience no pleasure (during discriminative meditation), but become free from attachment by means of discriminative intelligence." According to the Bhagavad Gita : " As (the flame of) a lamp standing in a sheltered spot flickers not, this is regarded as an illustration of a mind-restrained Yogin, who is practising concentration of mind."

RAPTURE, A PASSING STAGE.—The experience of rapture is frankly recognized in the East as a stage which has to be transcended. We have already seen the distinction which Sufi mystics draw between sobriety and intoxication. Agitation and intoxication are considered by them as marks of inexperience, while elevated agitation is transmuted into composure. The contrasted states are described as *wajd* (rapture) and *wajid* (existence), and the former is described as the preface to the latter. The end of rapture is the beginning of existence. The *wajid* of *wajd* is the cause of the *wajid's* being deprived of existence, which is the condition of the

wujud of *maujud* (the existence of the existence of God).¹ Amongst the stages in Sufism which must be passed before man's corporeal veil can be finally removed are (1) the *murid* (disciple) through ardency of desire, rendeth the heart's veil, and considereth the revealing of the mystery of love for God to be infidelity, save under the mastery of *waqif* (ecstasy); (2) the *murid* maketh himself the slave of love and joineth himself to *isfird* (outward separation) and to *isfird* (inward solitude); (3) the *murid* keepeth the heart's mirror before God's glory and becomes intoxicated with its wine; (4) the *murid* keepeth so engaged the tongue in *dhikr* (meditation of God), the heart in *fikr* (contemplation of God) and the soul in *mushahida* (viewing God's glory) that he considereth himself non-existent.² In no religion, however, has there been more strenuous attempt to reach a state of serene composure than in Buddhism, which has sought the banishment of Self, so that no sense of union with the divine One or any one may be aimed at or felt. "Alone the Buddhist *jhayin* sat, but he did not ' flee alone to the Alone ' exactly as did Plotinus," writes Mrs. Rhys Davids. Nor did the Buddhist *jhayin* announce: "I have known Him who is the Supreme Person," as did the Hindu *muni*. He calls himself *amambhū*; he attains the new life alone, and in his serene tranquillity he is alone, has neither teacher nor God, absolute or anything else. This is well brought out in the Buddha's memorable reply to Upaka Ajivika's query: "Who is your Master?"

"I have conquered all. I have known all. I am above all relativities. I have subdued everything. I am freed from thirst. Knowing everything, who can be my reference? There is no teacher of mine. None is my equal. I have no competing being in the world of gods and men. I am, indeed, the Free Man. I have no second as a teacher. I am the only Supremely Enlightened One. My mind is tranquil. I have extinguished everything."

In the Buddhist scriptures also the insight rather than the feeling of rapture in mystical meditation is clearly stressed. The outstanding definition in the *Dhamma Sangani* of *Samma-Samadhi* is as follows: "Stability, unshakness, persistence of thought, absence of wavering, ■ perplexity, of intellectual distraction, serenity, the faculty of rapt composure, right rapture." The Buddha discouraged the

¹ *Amir-i-Millat*, translated by Chelms, p. 88.

² *Ibid.*, p. 4.

feeling of rapture among the Bhikkhus, and emphasized the emancipation of both thought and feeling. In *Majjhima* six chief disciples of the Buddha ask one another one beautiful night what is their mental quality which might add a fresh charm to the beauty of the environment. One replies: "When a Bhikkhu finds out for himself internal peace, and, devoted to solitude, resisting not the feeling of rapture, becomes endowed with insight." Another says: "When a Bhikkhu has the divine eye." Others also give suitable replies. Finally Sariputta says: "When a Bhikkhu rules his heart and does not let his heart rule him." The Buddha gives preference to Sariputta's answer and adds:—

"But have from me what sort of Bhikkhu could on such a night add glory to the world. It is one who sitting calm, collected, self-possessed, makes resolve, 'I rose not from this seat until my heart is set free from the cover.'"¹

Buddhist Jhana.—The gradual emancipation of consciousness from both image and the feeling it arouses is characteristic of the sequence of the traditional *Jhana* exercises in Buddhist renechanism. ■ the first *jhana*, sloth and torpor is inhibited by *vīṭakka* (mental application). *Vīraa* (sustained application) permits the continued exercise of thought and dispels doubt. At first the interest is dull and slight, but gradually it develops into an intense interest amounting to rapture (*abhiṅga-pīti*). This diffused rapture is invariably followed by happiness (*sukha*), by which distraction and worry are removed. In the second *jhana* thought, the services of *vīṭakka* are dispensed with; in the third, both *vīṭakka* and *vīraa* are absent; in the fourth *pīti* is got rid of; in the fifth *sukha* is replaced by *upekkhā* or hedonae indifference to the pleasure derived from the five grades of interest.

"This hedonae indifference or neutrality of emotion is brought about by the continued voluntary exercise of the mind on the after-image to which it has been directed. And by it sustained contemplation reaches its full development in the fifth stage of *jhana*. In attaining to it apprehension of the two great types, which are 'accompanied by joy' is superseded by one of the types which are 'accompanied by indifference.'"²

It is a well-known mystical experience that when the active self-conscious activity of the mind disappears, the mystic

¹ See Elys David, *The Yogasūtra's Manual, introduction*.

² See B. Z. Aung's *Introductory Essay to Compendium of Philosophy*, p. 11.

can gain new knowledge which he is not easily able to reach by deliberate reasoning. It is for this reason that "the hedonic indifference becomes in the Buddhist *Jhāna* the starting point for fresh concentration on concepts". This signifies the *arahant's* entry into the fifth *jhāna*, which is now termed "*Jhāna as base for super-normal thought*" (*abhiññāpadaka jhāna*), because it is used as a basis for *abhiññā* (super-intellectual powers).¹ The course of mental training at this stage consists of fourteen processes, as described in the *Vimuddhi-magga*, whereby the *arahant's* will can gain a complete ascendancy over intellect and feeling. Supernormal powers of will then develop and these are classified, for instance, in the Yoga system of Patanjali or in the *Vimuddhi-magga*. All abnormal powers of the intellect and will arise only when the mystic attains what in the Buddhist *Jhāna* is characterized as a state of "purity, indifference, and mental clarity". We shall later attempt to account for the universality of such phenomena as those of telepathy, clairvoyance, and clairaudience, etc., which are familiar experiences amongst the mystically minded. How the Buddha himself reached a state of consciousness in which there was concentrated attention, yet no feeling nor thought, is described in a memorable conversation between the Master and one of his leading disciples, Anureddha, who was well known for his "celestial vision".

"Have you three, Anureddha, leading the life, zealous, ardent, and strenuous, experienced supernatural states, extraordinary Aryan knowledge and mighty happenings?"

"We have perceived, Lord, both an *aura* and a *vision* of forms. But lately these have all vanished and we do not attain to the after-image."

"But this is what you three must attain to. I, too, indeed, before I became wholly enlightened and Buddha, perceived both . . . *aura* and *vision* of forms. And then in my case, too, they vanished. So I pondered over the causes of this, and discerned that concentration had left me, and hence the *vision*. Also that my concentration had been depressed through *woes* of doubt, then by *want* of attention, then by *slutt* and *torpor*, then by *dread*, then by *slation*, then by *stupidity*, then by *trying too much*, then by *sluggishness of effort*, then by *longing*, then by *awareness of differences*. And to me continuing zealous, ardent, and strenuous, came perception of *aura* and *vision* of forms. But they soon vanished again, because I contemplated the forms too closely . . . Then I beheld the *aura*, but not the forms, . . . then the forms, not

the sure . . . then I beheld the one as immense, the others as small, and inversely. Finally I judged that my shortcomings in concentration were varieties of vitiated consciousness; and that, these being all got rid of, I would practise threefold concentration, to wit, applying attention and sustaining it, sustaining attention without applying it afresh, and concentration without attention in either way. And I concentrated with rapture, and without it, with delight and with indifference. And then in me, with concentration so practised, lo! these arose the knowledge and the insight that my emancipation was sure, that this was my last life, that now there was no more rebecoming."¹

The above conversation between master and disciple is of abiding interest in the history of religious mysticism, as showing a demarcation of the grades of higher mystical experience which all persons engaged in elevated contemplation must reckon with, irrespective of religion and country. In the fourfold sequel of *Arpa-jñāna*, only attempted by the adept and as a final step for complete emancipation of the self, all consciousness of detail or of limitations is done away with:—

(a) By passing beyond any conception of matter or idea of sensation, and suppressing the idea of multiplicity, a *śikṣā* attains the state of mind in which the only idea present is the infinity of space (*śūnyatā*).

(b) On this follows a stage in which the infinity or unboundedness of intellect (*śūnyatā*) is alone present.

(c) The next stage is reached when there is nothing at all present to the mind (*śūnyatā*). Then is achieved the stage when neither the presence of ideas nor the absence of ideas is specifically present (*śūnyatā*).

(d) Finally is attained the state where there is suppression of both sensation and idea (*śūnyatā*).² Only clarity and equanimity remain. The Buddhist jhāyin in the above manner, through the meditation of unbounded void space, of knowledge without object, of nothingness, passes into the stage where there is neither consciousness nor unconsciousness, and finally reaches the actual disappearance of feeling and notion. He introduces into the series of his thoughts so great a number of blank spaces that the further

¹ *Mayyama-Nidāna*, iii, 187 (text continued by Mrs. Elys Davids); *Buddhist Psychology*, pp. 166-7.

² *Kerā, Buddhist Philosophy*, p. 186, see also Mrs. Elys Davids, *Buddhist Psychology*, pp. 172-18.

generation of thought and desire is stopped.¹ Anuruddha, a disciple of the Buddha, describes his final experience as follows:—

"In five-fold concentrated ecstasy (*samadhi*)
My heart gave up its power and unity.
Seven compasses have I made my own,
My vision as a god's is clarified
I know the destinies of other lives
Whence beings come and whither they do go;
Life here below, or other-where of life—
Steadfast and rapt, in five-fold *Jhana* sunk."²

ATTENTION ATTITUDES AND THEIR FUSION.—The undeveloped consciousness of the child or primitive man is characterised by the play of concrete perceptions and memory images, of gross emotions and actions that pre-empt upon the things of the environment. As the individual and racial culture grows, mental life is characterised by the development of attitudes which sum up every one of these concrete experience types. This seems to be necessary for three reasons. In the first place, the principle of economy of effort would naturally lead to eliminate the details of the concrete experience, the functions of which could just as well be served through the attitude which epitomises them. In the second place, the principle of habit formation shows that there are always short cuts and eliminations of details. In the attitude we should expect the omission of the concrete phases of perception or memory which would be indispensable only when the organism is face to face in action with the environment. Thirdly, we find that there is a tendency towards generalisation when concepts are formed. A principle of economy leading to the telescoping of the concrete succession of experiences in terms of what we call attitudes thus seems to be operative in every sphere of mental life.

The transactions of a mature mind with the environment are thus carried on in terms of the concrete mental contents and the attitudes. The latter seem to link up the discrete contents, thus establishing a continuity in the mental life. We are also familiar with the levels of normal life in which thought and memory attitudes, or thought or attention attitudes co-operate. In the artistic mind, for instance, the

¹ Poonen, *The Way to Nirvana*, pp. 162-4.

² *Palmer of the Buddha*, 212 ff.

emotional attitude certainly joins hands with memory and perception. In this way, even if we survey the normal life of man, we find two marked tendencies, viz. first, the neglect of the concrete and development of attitudes, and, secondly, the integration of attitudes.

The mystic discipline carries forward both these tendencies of epitomizing the concrete contents in attitudes and linking up the different attitudes. It is not necessary for us to attempt to describe all the attitudes that man develops. We may refer, however, to the various types of attention attitudes which the psychologist recognises, the meaning attitude and the process attitude, *Bewusstseinslage* and *Einstellung*, emotive and sensory attitudes, as also those general tendencies of the mind to introversion and extroversion. It is quite apparent that the efficiency of the mind would be vastly increased if all these attitudes could be marshalled on every occasion when the individual is called upon to deal with a situation with which he may be faced. For his whole stock of mental experience and insight would be available for every reaction. It is in this sense that the *Bhagavad Gita* has said that the Yoga is the attainment of facility in action.

A quick succession of these attitudes, however, means that the field of consciousness instead of being split up into manifold experiences and attitudes presents a unity. This has been referred to in Patanjali's *Yoga Sutra* as *Bhagavati Parinama*, transformation of the concentration attitude. Such quick succession of mental states, however, is known in the sphere of sensations and feelings as fusion. We may, therefore, speak of a fusion of attitudes, which gives us a unitary whole, the mind being made exceedingly active and efficient and preserving a continuity like the flow of a fluid.

In the realm of sensations and feelings, we know that some blend more readily with others. The dominant tone, for instance, more easily blends with the over-tones. Tones with octave difference between them give a more unified fusion experience than the fourths or the fifths. Thus in the fusion of attitudes which we have contemplated we can imagine a valency of similar nature. The change from our normal mature consciousness to the state of mystic discipline would be through an elimination and alteration in at least

some of the attitudes which have developed through the normal concourse of mind and the environment. This is what is known as mental purification, common to all types of mysticism. The mystic unification of mind is the fusion of attitudes thus purified.

WORDLESS AND IMAGE-LESS THOUGHT.—A unitary field of consciousness thus formed would involve no inhibition or mental rivalry of attitudes. Hence the consciousness at this stage would not consist of any particular attitude but of a fusion of all the attitudes. The attitudes are, however, devoid of concrete contents. Their fusion will therefore be doubly devoid of concrete experiences. But the attitudes, as we have seen, epitomise particular groups of concrete contents, representing their meaning. The fusion of all the attitudes would naturally contain the meaning of the whole conscious life without bringing into play any concrete content of experience or any awareness of emotional urge. Yet in such a fusion no attitude would completely efface itself. The emotive attitudes would give a tint of joy to the whole, the joy which is perhaps not an emotion; for emotion is but concretisation of the attitude. Similarly there arises a clarity of vision, a clarity which does not, however, formulate illuminative ideas nor consequently their elaboration into subjects and predicates. It is a clearness of understanding consequent upon the harmony of the attitudes of action, feeling, and remembering with the attitude of thinking out. This thought, however, is not verbal for words and their sounds represent but the elaborations of attitude in their outward direction. Hence wordless and image-less thought comprising the whole range of man's experience is for the time being in possession of the mind. It conveys nevertheless the fullness of meaning. For all the contents which give meaning to thoughts are present in this wordless thought through the proxy of their attitudes. Wordless and image-less thought is characteristic of the Buddha's and of Dionysius's mental state. "Then is he delivered from all seeing and being seen, and passes into true mystical darkness of ignorance where he excludes all intellectual apprehensions and abides in the utterly unpalpable and invisible, being wholly his who is above all with no other dependence either on himself or any other; and is made one as to his nobler part with the

utterly unknown ; and at the same time, in that very knowing nothing, he knows what transcends the mind of man." (Dionysius.) To the very same effect the Buddha says : " In seeking for salvation I reached an experience the Nibbana which is unborn, uncreated, secure from attachment, undecaying, unaging, unlamenting, and unstained. This condition is indeed reached by me which is deep, difficult to see, difficult to understand, tranquil, excellent, beyond the reach of mere logic, subtle, and to be realized only by the wise." ¹ Even the categories of unity and universality do not suffice to comprehend Nibbana. " It is not an experience that one may identify oneself with it, or think that either one is Nibbana or one is in Nibbana or one is from Nibbana or Nibbana is one's own."

Positive Attitudes or Buddhas.—Quite distinct from the above *jñāna* exercises we have also in Buddhism the cultivation of a positive attitude, such as filling the mind with love, with sympathy with sorrow, with sympathy with joy and with equanimity, and " pervading the whole world " with the above four emotions. Such states of emotional as contrasted with intellectual meditation are called *Brahma-viharas*, and they are sometimes represented as coming after the four *jñānas*, and sometimes as replacing them.² The *Vuddhi-magga* has a whole chapter devoted to the exposition of the divine states, viz. (1) the cultivation of love, (2) the cultivation of pity, (3) the cultivation of sympathy, and (4) the cultivation of even-mindedness ; and it is striking how the expansion of the profound sentiments accompanies the soaring of the intellect beyond all relativities to the infinitudes of space-time, consciousness, and void. The treatise quotes at the end a significant passage from the *Halidda-vatana Sutta* :—

" Supremely beautiful is the consecration of the heart through love. Supreme is the sphere of infinite space for the consecration of the heart through pity. Supreme is the sphere of infinite consciousness for the consecration of the heart through sympathy. Supreme is the sphere of nothingness for the consecration of heart through even-mindedness."

It would appear that the concepts of beauty, infinite

¹ *Majjhima-Nikaya*, I, 167, quoted by R. C. Low in his article on " Aspects of Nirvana," *Indian Culture*, October, 1936.

² *Edict, Nirvana and Buddhism*, vol. I, p. 215

space, infinite consciousness and nothingness are correlates of the unbounded feelings of love, pity, sympathy, and even-mindedness respectively.¹ Such a correspondence between concepts and sentiments holds good also of the traditional Yoga literature.²

PATH OF PURITY.—This is *Hīnayāna* and not *Mahāyāna*. It disproves the cheap and uninformed criticism that Indian Buddhist speculation did not favour an ethic of strong, manly, and social action. Here in fact the development of higher insights and intentions and the expansion of the abstract social sentiments form the warp and woof of the mystical consciousness. If the mind deliberately cultivates charity and harbours no uncharitable thought, charity becomes a psychic force and inundates the world even as the sound of a trumpet spreads in all directions. The ideal is set forth in a most remarkable passage in the *Sūtra-Nīpata*,—

"Even as a mother watcheth o'er her child,
Her only child, as long as life doth last,
So let us, for all creatures, great or small,
Develop each a boundless heart and mind
Ay, let us practice love for all the world,
Upward and downward, yonder, thenceon
Unstamped, free from ill-will and enmity."

TRANSCENDENT POWERS OF MYSTICS.—Along with a profounder sympathy for all fellow-creatures and a greater intensity of life and vividness of consciousness, the mystic, as we have seen, attains certain powers of both body and mind, which, when they are correlated by ordinary faculties, lead to supreme achievements transcending human greatness. We have records of precognition, precognition, telepathy, or clairvoyance, from the mystics of all countries and of all ages. The world's greatest artists have always listened to strange music and rhythms of expression within, which emerge with spontaneity in spite of themselves. They have found in their compositions unimagined excellence of technique. They have written at some one else's dictation, and when the masterpiece has come out in a flash can hardly attribute

¹ *The Path of Purity* (Varekha-sūtra), p. 272. An introduction of mysticism into this book is even more important than Patanjali's Yoga system, in which Buddhabhāshya previously expounded.

² Vide the *Mahāvastu* of the *Vaṃśa* Pāṇini.

it to conscious art or device. The world's finest natures are guided at critical moments by a vision, by a dream, by a mysterious monitory voice within, which they reverc and for which they embrace suffering and even death. It is thus that out of the raw material of the mystical consciousness genius and inspiration are fashioned. Myers's great works on *Human Personality* and *Science and a Future Life*, and the *Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research*, are full of evidence of the communication with minds in the spiritual world which overcomes barriers of time and distance. All this is proving scientifically the intuitional world of the mystic. Para-psychology or psychical research is a science now in the cradle, though there is a growing recognition that the problematic aspect of psychology is now exceedingly important for the advancement of the science. Telepathy and mind-reading suggest that individual minds are parts of one super-mind, and that under inner discipline and control one individual mind, on the foundation of the one super-mind, knows the contents of other individual minds, just as in dissociation one ego knows the other ego's contents. Clairvoyance, telekinesis, materialization and prophecy are far more difficult to understand. May it be that the mind is a *miroir de l'univers*, though in very exceptional persons does the performance of this mirror become conscious in the ego-form? The hypothesis is that when the ego-side of the pure mind becomes, through the process of abstract concentration, free from the disturbance of the sensory and organic processes, the conscious pure mind operates and apprehends phases or states of reality which are not bound to the spatio-temporal system of relations. The spiritualist hypothesis is also legitimate, and the spirit might be a part of this super-mind and might only become individual spirit again under certain conditions, and communicate with this world.¹ Minds, as Oetesch observes, are capable of a mutual super-normal transference of knowledge in the mental field, which is something more than thought reading or clairvoyance. Oetj in fact assumes that a "transcendental" plan exists for each man in a universal and

¹ For a suggestive discussion see Hans Oetesch, *The Crisis in Psychology*, chap. v, *Mind and Universe*, pp. 88-104, and *Psychical Research*, pp. 122-126.

suprapersonal consciousness; it is within this latter that the *Yogi* reads the plan. E. von Hartmann calls this "a telephone connection in the absolute". If we put aside the spiritualistic hypothesis, only one possibility of understanding is left to us, viz. that the subconscious ego is omniscient to a certain degree, as Leibnitz believed his monads to be, and that in the mystics or mediums parts of the total knowledge about the universe transcend the threshold of consciousness.¹ Patanjali in his *Yoga-sutra* refers to the following powers which the mystic acquires: thought-reading, clairvoyance, insight into the past and future, capacity to enter another's body, or to create one's double, to float in water, to walk on thorns, super-normal bearing, lightness of body, invisibility, etc. Some physical paraphenomena are no doubt due to the known physical effects of will, suggestion and auto-suggestion. Mind, including the unconscious and the subconscious, is now regarded by many as an agent able to promote material events. The recent developments of parapsychology are indeed diminishing the mental resistance among both scientists and laymen as regards such phenomena. The immediate transference between minds which parapsychology has now clearly recognised explains the influence which the Indian saints have, through ages, exerted upon both princes and peasants in India.

PSYCHOLOGICAL EXPLANATION OF MYSTICAL POWERS AND GRACES.—There are, however, some mystical powers or graces which may be explained by the known normal laws of human nature. It is incontestable that during fervent ecstasy or deep contemplation the sensibility to external impressions greatly diminishes. This is due to the fact that the motor activity in relation to ordinary sensory objects, which gives the sense of life, is suspended and the incipient responses are all directed to the objects of meditation. Thus when the body is lulled to relative passivity the mind enters upon a new phase of creative activity and, working upon the amorphous materials supplied by the organic experiences, fashions a world of symbols, images, and transcendental experiences. Such is the origin of the divine vision, the sense of the divine presence, the hearing of the divine

¹ Hans Driesch, in his chapter on *The Cause and against Physical Effects*, edited by Moussier.

voice, or the healing and soothing touch of the Lord familiar in all religions. As the mystic adapts his behaviour to the constructions of his own memory and imagination, he sees, hears, smells intuitively, with the senses in the mind, as if the sensations are actually experienced. Severe fasting and deprivation of sleep, or isolation; the prolonged maintenance of a characteristic posture, and certain breathing and physical exercises of the chest, diaphragm, and abdomen; the rhythm of music; the repetition of rhythmical bodily movement or peculiar dancing; singing or reiteration of a word or formula—all these change or remove the kinesthetic and visceral feelings and alter the normal feeling of self. By such means is engendered a different sense of relation between the body and the outside world. Respiration is partially inhibited, and the sensations of pressure and equilibrium may be lost. For example, the mystic may feel that his body has been floating in the air or that he has left the body and ascended the third heaven. Levitation or bilocation, according to Bastide, arises from muscular oceanesthesia, muscle tone, or the particular emotions induced by motor attitudes. A changed visceral sensitivity is the basis of many of the supernatural impressions of mystics, who revel in the separation of the soul or "the subtle body" from the physical frame. Sweet odour of flowers or incense, characteristic pressure contact shown, for instance, in the laying on of hands and fingers, and in ceremonially holding sacred symbols, deep rhythmical breathing, etc., modify the visceral and organic functions, and induce a feeling of exhilaration, of toniccy or a successful adjustment within the body and adaptation to its world. The tensor nerves throughout the organism bespeak an emotional state in which the mystic feels besides himself. Thus is the mystic's familiar feeling of ecstasy, which greatly diminishes the sense of fatigue. Unusual physical or intellectual toil may be undertaken by the mystic at times when he is aglow with spiritual fervour. Hunger and thirst may also disappear, and Eastern mystics have been known to shut themselves up underground for months and even years, and to come back to life after a state of suspended animation. Lastly, there may be insensibility to pain altogether. This explains, for instance, the agreeableness of red-hot irons to the

Muhammadan dervishes, who stick them in their arms and legs and cool them in their mouth without a word, murmur, or sign of pain. In fact they call such red-hot irons "roses", because the feel of them is as agreeable to them as the perfume of the rose is to the voluptuary.¹ Similarly, many of the Christian martyrs suffered torture or died at the stake without a cry or moan of pain. Differences in methods of concentration produce different effects. The fixation of the eyes upon the sun, the moon, or any bright object, or, again, upon the tip of the nose, or, again, the prolonged concentration of the pupils towards the forehead, produce hyperæsthetic visions, sudden gleams of fire, lightning, fire flies, fog, dark blue skies, vast white expanses, or again full visions of God, or of re-enactment of divine happenings. Often, also, there are hyperæsthetic auditions, a bee hum, murmur of the sea, noise of hurricane, sound of a flute or bell or the word *Om* heard in the depth of the soul, induced by prolonged control of respiration and shutting both the ears with the finger-tips. The flashes of light like those of streaks of lightning, a cluster of fire-flies or of a glow of fire, in which the mystics often revel, are idæo-retinal illuminations often induced by mechanical pressure on the retina by the finger-tips, while these combine into a vast round illumination like that of thousands of suns and moon or of a dark blue orb as concentration deepens. Binocular fixation, due to concentration on the point in between the eyebrows, produces the same sensory phenomena through local hyperæsthesia; while the reduction or elimination of waste products in the system accompanies the experience of delightful odours. A deep stillness of the body enables the mystic to hear a hyperæsthetic murmur holding together his meaningful attentional processes. Later on memory and imagination induce the hyperæsthetic visions, auditions and experiences of fragrance, without the presence of the sensory phenomena. Deep induced respiration also causes cardiac and vascular stimulation and yields a delightful organic thrill. This kinaesthetic and organic exhilaration, made habitual, indicates deeper adaptations in which the body-mind, instead of responding to isolated sets of stimuli in the environment, reacts as a heap to the Universe as a whole.

¹ *Amrita-Vidya*, p. 187

This vague though intense experience is the indispensable background of the mystic's emotions of joy and competence and it persists long after the other sensory experiences have disappeared. All mystical visions and locations carry with them a deep spiritual meaning and are of extraordinary power and efficacy, and are deeply, if not permanently, engraved on the mystic's memory. Sometimes, again, the normal relation between sense-organs and sensations is changed, and touch, sight, and hearing may be the outcome of the stimulation of a different organ. New colours are appreciated, strange music is heard, while the familiar sights and sounds take on a new brilliance. The modification of breathing, the long rhythmical spells of inhalation and exhalation, as well as cessation of breath, no doubt influence circulation by acting upon the unstriated muscles and glands—the muscles of the arterial walls (blood-pressure). Hence a great variety of new organic sensations emerges, which supplies the physical background of the deeply moving sentiments and experiences of the mystic. The time and space relations are affected. The mystic sees a light that never was on sea and land. He hears a sound which ear has not heard. He conquers space and time. He exists in different places at the same time, according to his will. Yaśa observes: "He smells amid the ordinary preoccupations of life, perhaps in the middle of winter, an odour of spring flowers; or has an unimaginable sense of physical well-being that is described as a transformation of the sense of touch, or meets in empty places melodious sound or a fine sight." He becomes luminous in his ecstasy and exhales sweet perfumes. His sacred touch cures illness or moral depravity. Even the birds and beasts of the forest love him; such is the tenderness that he diffuses all around. Stronger feelings surge from the unfathomable depths of his heart. The voice of the whole humanity is uttered in his prayer. His body expands into the macrocosm, or shrinks into the electrical sub-atom. There is, as it were, a complete transformation of his mind and attitudes. Such is the naturalistic explanation of some of the experiences of religious mysticism. Vener, illumination, smell, and touch are performed by the sub-conscious side of the mystic, but these may also be genuine, and be classified together with "materializations". These are "affections of matter" on

the mystic's part, and it means but a slight difference whether matter is ordered into specific form or into a specific combination of rhythmical movements which will be more usual with the mystic.

HIGHEST MYSTICAL EXPERIENCES.—But elevated religious meditation delves deeper. Both the sensory phenomena and the ineffable feelings are transcended. The mystic then leaves the wonderful world of rapture. Realizing in himself the universal and permanent conditions of contemplative union with the divine, he arrives at intuitions of a metaphysical import, which reveal a new relation between the Being and things. It is there that he establishes a new relation with an all-inclusive Source of Life and Mind; from here emerge, as a result of fresh efforts, the spiritual intuitions, which—and not the mystic's efficiency and rapture—are his highest gifts. When the mind shuns mental delights and is completely quiescent, a mystic can concentrate on spiritual intuitions beyond the relativities, visualise concepts and mental images like physical objects and it becomes easy for him to survey ideal relationships as empirical relationships of faith. It is from the mystic's keen observation of abstract categories and first principles beyond space and time that their origin and meaning are clearly revealed to him, and thus profound insight engenders a feeling of omniscience. As he returns to the centre of life and source of all manifestation, even the trivial things of life are invested with an eternal meaning, and there is imported a new zest in his immediate experience. He lives in a realm of pure significance into which no postulate reaches, which conversely, however, animates all living postulates and lends them substance. This significance becomes such a profoundly intense and dynamic entity with him that not only does he perceive truth directly everywhere but he can forestall all possible consequences of his and everybody's ideas and actions and can attain whatever he wishes. It is from this new and higher form of consciousness that the Indian Yogin derives supernatural powers. Keyserling observes: "Man must rise above his ocular instrument for recognition; he must get beyond the biological boundaries whose classical abstract expression is contained in Kant's criticism; he must grow beyond his present gauge; ■■■ consciousness must, instead of cleaving to the surface, learn

to reflect the spirit of profundity which is the primary cause of his being."¹

In Buddhism the following are among the extraordinary powers mentioned: the capacity to resist pain and death, the capacity of creating phenomena outside one's body, the capacity of transferring one's body into different personalities, the power of creating one's own double, telepathy of sight or hearing, thought-reading, supernatural insight into the past or the future, exaltation of memory, etc.² Such powers are called *hamsa* & *vraks* among the Moslem Dervishes, and enumerated as follows: the faculty of foreseeing coming events; of predicting their occurrence; of preserving individuals from harm and evil which would otherwise certainly result to them; of restoring harmony of sentiment between those who would otherwise be relentless enemies.³ Evidence of superior intellectual and spiritual powers (as distinguished from supernatural physical powers described above) of the mystic and the saint has indeed come and still comes from all countries. Such powers are regarded by Patanjali as obstacles to *Samadhi*; but they are powers in the worldly state. According to the *Sankhya* the powers attained by Yoga are not to be denied, like recovery through medicines, etc. Cases have been recorded by Myers and others in which men by experiment leave their bodies and show themselves to their friends. Telekinesis, levitations, raps, materializations connected with the body of a medium, photographable hauntings in the presence of a supernaturally endowed person, and scratches or similar marks obtained on objects under the same conditions are (granting their reality) now attributed to the single fundamental phenomenon of materialization connected with the body of a parapsychically endowed person. "The assumption," observes Driesch, "is that the supernaturally endowed person can not only materialize apparitions as true materializations, but can also produce rigid invisible structures with which to pull, knock, scratch, and so on." It is not strange that mystics and saints who discipline their intellect and emotions acquire these and

¹ For an exposition of the Indian Yogin's experience and results of meditation, see Kieperting, *The Lives of a Philosopher*, vol. 1, pp. 227-278; also Paul Brandon, *A Search for Secret India*.

² Compendium of Philosophy, pp. 51-2.

³ Brown, *Dervishes*, p. 226.

other supernatural faculties and that their whole life becomes an inspiration, based as it is on the concentration of the best of man's faculties and joys. No doubt, when in the ecstatic state, the consciousness or reference of self entirely disappears, and yet there survives lucidity, and equanimity, the highest truth of the phenomenal world, becomes accessible. This is the experience of all mystics. The process by which these truths are revealed is not yet analyzed, but that there is such revelation, and that it can be deliberately sought, are familiar matters in the mystical world. George Russell says:—

"When our being is lit we find the house of our being has many abobers, and we must ask whether they have the right to be in our house; and there are corridors there leading into the hearts of others, and windows which open into eternity, and we can hardly tell where our own being ends and another begins, as if there is any end to our being. If we brood with love upon this mystic unity, following the meditation ordained by Buddha for the brothers of his order, to let our mind pervade the whole wide world with heart of love, we come more and more to permeate, or to be pervaded by the love of others."

He asks:—

"Is there a centre within us through which all the threads of the universe are drawn, a spiritual atom which surveys the spiritual infinitudes even as the eye in the mirror of the eternal heavens?"

PSYCHOLOGICAL ENIGMAS OF MYSTICAL EXPERIENCES.—

No doubt psychologists like Starbuck, Leuba, and Coe, who have attempted a naturalistic explanation of mystical states, so far have confined themselves to those phases of religious experience which are characterised by the play of the emotions arising out of union with a personal God. The mystic's complete personal history and religious tradition, as well as childish affective life, have thrown a flood of light on such states. A mere analysis, however, of the organic conditions of the symbols and images in which the religious life manifests itself, does not, however, carry us far. For the ultimate aim of mystical life, namely the transformation of the self by the establishment of a contact with the totality of the life-process and its accrual of a metaphysical status, are far removed from the visceral kinaesthetic changes and imaginative constructs associated with the beginnings of religious life. But even in the study of the emotional situation those deeply moving unverbaliized responses which integrate themselves into the ecstasy and higher apprehension of the

mystics are not adequately understood, while the acquisition of supernatural powers also is not fully explained. In more elevated meditation, the explicit emotions and sentiments, which alone have been attacked by the naturalists, disappear. The mystic meditating upon the infinite modes and attributes of God is led to a true notion of metaphysical import, namely that of absorption of the self or soul into the deity without modes and attributes. No doubt the insights into an eternal mode of existence which transcends both time and space depend upon a gradual closing and simplification of the avenues through which these ideas come from the defining senses. It is then that the kinesthetic and organic senses intimate those subtle and undefinable adjustments which assure the mystic perfect fulfilment and harmony and constitute his experience of rapture. Time and space are the special objects of the defining senses. But there are deeper experiences like truth, beauty, or goodness, which extend beyond the spatial and temporal existences, and which elude definitions and descriptions. Such profounder insights and attitudes are the outcome of a perfect poise and sensitivity of the entire mechanism of body and mind which becomes finally attuned to the world of experience. Now the mystic's organic sense-complex enters directly into such vital and mental processes, while cognition can only use the language of symbolism, which merely suggests and cannot define.

Gradually he transcends both definite and indefinite consciousness, sensory processes, and indescribable feelings. The complex of organic sense experiences, which provides the basis of the sense of personality, must disappear before the mystic can rise above the duality of self and the divine. Here he enters upon the stage of pure consciousness, in which he realises a union or identity with the object of his contemplation. The inadequacy of religious psychology consists then in this, that it is helpless with regard to this aspect of experience, which is, however, a real fact with an objective significance. In philosophical mysticism, as well as in higher forms of art or science, mind and object are transcended; and the mystic's spirit, in its absorption into the Pure Being or the Absolute, rises above form, space, and time, above all relativities. In fact the deeper the mystic sinks down into the ground and depth of his own self, and the more his being

is realized in consciousness, beyond space and time, and behind the multiplicity of the defining senses and capacities, the stronger does the feeling of unity become. Therefore, as Keyserling observes, one would have every ground for supposing that from the point of view of recognition, the doctrine of essential unity is the best expression of metaphysical reality. In fact all the predicates of the speculation on the Being are easily transferred to the real self or soul or spirit simply out of its own nature. But where the metaphysician sees mere connections and relationships of affinity, the mystic sees actual identity.¹ Psychology, so far, may accordingly analyse mystical experiences into complex, affective, and intellectual states, but it cannot decide on the value of the deeper insights and attitudes of a metaphysical significance. Nor is a direct examination of such experiences by experimental psychology possible. For this probably we have to depend solely upon the mystic's own testimony as regards the nature and process of modification of his imagination and consciousness, and these have to be clarified and reduced to order through the use of comparative and genetic methods. It is then that we shall understand one most significant way of interpreting the world of experience. Science and philosophy in all their forms express the unity of the Idea, but cannot exhaust the reality. It is by contemplative union that the mystic feels the concrete unity of life, and satisfies the fullness of human aspirations. The mystic intuition which alone can express the ever-receding fullness and harmony of concrete individual experience must represent, therefore, the starting point of philosophy. On the other hand, unless the individual's concrete experience is fashioned into concepts and symbols by philosophy it cannot rise beyond the flash of ecstasy, and be preserved as a universal treasure. Thus philosophy at each step enriches mystical intuition, helping it onward to seek and find fuller and fuller concord.

¹ *The Tragedy of a Philosopher*, vol. 2, p. 226, see Otto, *Mysticism, East and West*, p. 226.

CHAPTER XV

MYSTICISM OF IDENTITY

PHYSICAL AIDS TO SPIRITUAL EXALTATION.—The ecstatic condition is brought about by different methods and gives rise to most varied states of consciousness. By the action of drugs and narcotics, by prolonged fasting and other self-mortification, by tarrying long at the magic fire, by gazing at the midday sun, or by fixing attention upon a formula, symbol, or image, man sometimes seeks God through a process of auto- or hetero-hypnosis. A combination of hypnotic procedure with relaxation of the body induces a condition of physical and mental stability which is the foundation of mastery over will and imagination. Lest the primordial impulses divert the stock of mental energy into undesirable channels, philosophical meditation relating to the transitoriness of the objects of desire is practised, as well as some form of austerity. No doubt a certain degree of asceticism and gratuitous self-denial is an indispensable step towards achieving a tranquil state of mind. Man thereby obtains some release from both agreeable and disagreeable things in life, so that he can resort to elevated contemplation more easily. A specific postural pattern as well as management and partial inhibition of breathing until it becomes slow, deep, and regular are also commonly practised, especially in the East. The experience has been that these contribute to calmness of body, subjugation of excitement, and concentration of attention along one desired channel. At work throughout are the processes of hypnosis and hetero-suggestion. Such processes were formerly condemned by older medical psychologists as encouraging dissociations instead of bringing them under control and creating automatism or liberating the impulses. But the new school of medical psychologists no longer condemns such methods, and even sees in them possibilities for education in self-mastery. According to Janet, to define suggestion as error, and persuasion as truth, is no less unreasonable than it would be to define imagination

as sin, and *mercy* as virtue. Many contemporary psychologists, indeed, regard suggestion as a psychological phenomenon which is by no means pathological, defining it as the artificial activation of a tendency which the subject is not able to activate by the unaided powers of the will. In the field of religion, inner discipline is sought by hypnotic suggestion by means of a formula or symbol, image or ritual, which belongs to the subject's religious tradition and which, without his reflective assent, may guide his latent activities by the collaboration of the rest of his personality. Thus the subject resolves a conflict of ideas and impulses in the permanent form of his religion. He finds a certain peace in the balance of symbols, images, and beliefs, and in the resolution of intense and opposing motives. It is God who fulfils balked impulses and desires, soothes the troubled heart, and adds zest to life. Hence God becomes more real than the changing appearances, and man becomes aware of the reality of God in a new manner, feels Him, and communicates with Him. The mystic sees visions, hears strange sounds and words, and smells mysterious odours. He becomes absorbed or merged in the Divine, and has certain profound experiences which both he and the materialistic psychologist agree cannot be described in words.

BUDDHIST MYSTICAL PRACTICE.—In Buddhism, suggestion works differently, there being no absorption of the mystic in God or in Anything. Here the self is directed to adjust all emotion or thought, all reference to itself; and to cultivate certain infinitudes. Coupled with intellectual exercises, certain emotions are also deliberately cultivated in meditation for their infinite range and depth. Many of the Buddhist monks and nuns cultivated a feeling of boundless charity and goodwill to all things that breathe. It is recorded, for instance, that Thera Subhuti developed his insight on the basis of love-*jhana* and won arahantship. Teaching the Dhamma without distinction or limitation, he became chief among the brethren who cultivated universal amity. And because, while going round for alms, he fell, at house after house, into love-*jhana*, taking his alms when he emerged from reverie: this was judged to bring great reward to the alms-givers, and he became chief among them that were held worthy of gifts. Therefore the Exalted One said:

"Subhuti, bhikkhus, is the chief of my bhikkhu-disciples in Universal aridity, and chief among such as are held worthy of gifts."¹ Similarly, *Thera Rivata* sings:—

"Nay, love I do none, none intimate
Well-trained, by solitary progression grown,
Even as by the Buddha, it is taught,
With all men I a friend, comrade to all,
And to all creatures kind and merciful;
A heart of amity I cultivate,
And ever in good will is my delight."

The ideal satisfaction from the mental images and reflexes draws his desires away from exterior objects. Gradually the desires themselves lose their edge and mind becomes tranquil as the biostrophic succession of mental states centred round the religious object ceases to attract. At this stage the image becomes conceptualized or de-individualised and it is now that a subjective sensation of luminance is felt, and the worshipper experiences the supernormal consciousness, with or without the thrilling emotion of rapture.² As the mind is lifted beyond the limits of space and time, the mystic gains a joy resulting from the breaking down of all relativities. His feeling of individuality diminishes, and instead there develops a cosmic feeling. Man's communion with Nature, animate and inanimate, becomes vivid, and he sees as it were into the life of things. This is the stage which ultimately develops into an acosmic mysticism. In lower mysticism, however, it is the immediate feeling of communion which dominates, without much of reflection and discrimination. The motor tendencies are reduced as far as possible, and the unquiet responses bring home to the mind dissociated from the world the presence of God. Even the conjurers and shamanists are known to acquire a sense of quickened life and marvellous mental energy. In higher religious men gain, through worship and prayer, peace of mind and moral energy, as well as clarity of vision. Everything depends upon the aim and nature of the process of suggestion. Thus the psychic constitution of the individual, and the particular object towards which suggestion is focussed, determine the results of meditation.

YOGA, AND THE HIGHER MYSTICISM.—In higher mysticism

¹ *See: Bhaya Darsaka, Passion of the Buddha*, pp. 4, 8.

² *Tagore's Gitanjali*, p. 22.

the external factors which induce hypnosis and suggestion and feeling, unmediated by thought, are gradually eliminated, and we have an emphasis more and more on meditation. This is, indeed, the chief object of some of the Yoga practices. In the *Buddhist Yogavacara's Manual*, we read: "The student reclines seats himself cross-legged, keeping his body erect, firm in self-possession; thoughtfully he inhales, thoughtfully exhales his breath, so that, taking a long in-breathing or a long out-breathing, or taking a quick in-breathing or a quick out-breathing, he knows in each case what he does." The regular change of breathing in direct and then in reverse order, which is common to most forms of elevated contemplation, as well as constant change of posture which, in the case of the *Yogavacara*, takes place more than 1,500 times in the course of the whole exercise, completely exclude any notion of hypnotic trance. Similarly, the deliberate calling up of mental images of earth, water, fire, air, and space (or solidity, fluidity, brightness, sameness, and void), concentration on ideas of time, space, individuality, etc., as well as discrimination and retrospection, which form parts of Hindu Yogic meditation, all indicate the emphasis of clarity and insight. In the *Ceylonese Compendium of Philosophy*, by Anuruddha, we find also that a subject is advised to reflect and retrospect past *jñāna* and, besides, to cultivate the habit of inducing and emerging from *jñāna* at will. Moreover, the *jñāna* formula appears again and again with some such word inserted after each stage of *jñāna*, e.g. love or emptiness (i.e. of soul), or, again, it may be one of the exercises in will and imagination.¹ We read that there is *jñāna* as base for the fixation of will, in which the subject wills the desired phenomenon, or again, *jñāna* as base for supernatural thought.² All this completely disposes any idea of trance. Some of the Hindu and Buddhist meditations may bear comparison with the *Spiritual Exercises* of St. Ignatius Loyola, in so far as they all seek to elicit some appropriate religious emotion and control, and direct the will and imagination. It is for these reasons that the path of meditation is described as *Raja Yoga* in Hinduism, indicating its pre-eminence. As the introspective character of the spiritual life increases, we

¹ See Mrs. Helen Davids, *Buddhist Psychology*, p. 112

² S. E. Assag, *Compendium of Philosophy*, p. 101

find less and less stress laid on the emotional attitudes, devotion, and worship. And, indeed, the conception of a Personal God is superseded by the idea of an Infinite, Unknowable Being, of a Super-Self; or, again, as in Buddhist mysticism, the disappearance of all feeling and notion is the goal of meditation to the exclusion of every self-reference. It is here that the ontological or philosophical tradition of the mystic also plays an important part in governing his psychic state. On the other hand, the religious intuitions are independent of the religious form or tradition of the mystic and exercise a function which cannot be replaced by philosophy. As Abbotta observes: "Religion and philosophy are only abstractly separable; the one always calls back to the other. There is a flash of mystic intuition at the roots of all philosophy; there is a philosophic exigency at the foundation of all religious rapture." For many centuries the Brahmins of India cultivated a mystical asceticism which revelled in the identification of self with all sentient life and the universe. For the Buddhist, on the other hand, the chief end was the "annihilation of heart and emancipation of insight" through the cultivation of a psychic state of nothingness. In Mahayāna Buddhism, again, meditation was itself subordinated to the cultivation of the active virtues of benevolence and mercy, and we had the ideal of the Cosmic Person, the *Bodhisattva* who identifies himself with all creatures and all creatures with himself. The Mahayāna Buddhist maintained that meditation in the nothingness of the self seemed to result, and in the Hinayana really did result, in apathy and *Nirvana*, by destroying the activity of the mind bent on the objects of the knowledge. According to the Mahayāna system, the nothingness of the self (*Anātmanā*) did not warrant man in remaining inactive; on the other hand, it supplied the reason for sacrificing himself for his neighbour. Further, the Mahayāna doctrines gave rise in China and Japan to various schools of emotional mysticism which kept alive an ever-expanding life of love and service to fellow creatures. As Rudolf Otto explains: "The Buddhahridaya, the eternal Buddha heart of the Mahayāna, is essentially reverse of the *Bhūta-tathata*; and this because the eternal Buddha heart is a much more immediate source of the *Alakṣi* than the Brahman. Therefore

is was not a mere historical chance but an inner necessity which caused the Mahayana school of the Mahayana in China to build up the bhakti cult of Amida and Kwanyin as the second mainstay of its practice." Yet Amida and Kwanyin are not simply the Isvara or personal God of the Indian bhakti schools but have to be viewed against an entirely different emotional background in which these have their origin. It is in this manner that the difference of conception which each school of religion has formed about the end of man governs both mystical experience as well as ethical ideal. Indeed, the Mahayana Buddhist's *alaya-vijnana*, which is different from *jñana* of the Upanishads, and his identification of the world order with *Nirvana* lie at the basis of a more active and more variegated mystical consciousness than primitive Buddhism perhaps could encourage. In a similar manner the cult of the personal God in the Bhagavata religion was based on an emphasis of immanence, and denial of ignorance and dissolution which formed the characteristic trend of the old and orthodox schools and found the necessary philosophical background in the new systems of the Sankhya and the Yoga. More than the cold speculation of the philosophical mystic who, in his attainment of the majesty and isolation of self-hood, sees the social order as an illusion and a snare, or the ardent, impassioned religious experience which certain Indian Vajra and Tantrik sects revel, the calm and believing devotion whether of Hindu, Christian, or Mahayana Buddhist. Theism is the inspiration of a pure, and righteous life which fulfils God's will and joy in society and establishes the paradise in man's environment here and now. Thus the Indian bhakti cults engendered a new attitude towards the world and towards the given reality of things. The Yoga system, which was formerly mere philosophy and denied the world which it painted in pessimistic colours, was at the same time transformed by its contact with bhakti cults. It simply added God without organically relating Him to its philosophy, became theistic and henceforth proved a ready ally of all religious mysticism, high or low. Among the mystics of all creeds and religions in India, the system of meditation follows the essentials of the Yoga practice in the preliminary stages of regulated breathing, easy posture, persistent turning upwards of the eyeballs at a certain angle,

concentrated gazing on certain objects, etc. The art of concentration, so acquired, is utilized differently according to the distinctive form of the worshipper's thought-culture. Thus the worshipper of Krishna enjoys the presence and sport of personal God; the devotee of the Mother Goddess cherishes the vision of God in the sky and the earth, in all things great or small; the Vedantist seeks to realize the identity of his own self with the Over-Soul; while the Buddhist sits steadfast and rapt in the annihilation of his own feeling and consciousness. In the higher reaches of the mystical consciousness, characterized by a searching self-analysis and inquiry into causes and relativities, philosophy and religion are reunited.

A MYSTICAL EXPERIENCE.—The following succinct survey of the stages of contemplation of an Indian mystic, culled from an unpublished diary, is an argument against the psycho-analytical theory of repressed desires, and there are similar experiences everywhere no matter what the mystic's religion and social ideas may be.


"Through long and quiet meditation the fog and cloud which formerly enveloped my vision gradually disappeared and there shone a tender lustre, steady and cold, that surpassed the best in my beam. There were no more shrieks of lightning, fireflies, or violent gusts of wind that became normal, which my mind had been daunted or struggled against excitement. Instead I saw, for instance, the vast sea under the lovely moonshine, and the expanse and depth of the sea came to being to me. I heard the humming of the bee full of the consciousness of spring or the soft languorous note of the flute wafted from a distant remembrance of things that no longer belonged to me. Then the morning star shone, shining in dark, blue, unobscured space, and it hared me into the infinite. What strange kinds of space are hidden in the recesses of the brain! What a rude shock to our ideas of time! And what wonder when a stroke of light sounds like a song and a shining figure turns into the sensation of a sweet unforgettable smell. At times for days and months I lived among beings appalled in a celestial light. There was a luminous procession of gods and angels, dancing glades, lakes, and forests. Oblivious of my body and the earth, I roamed amongst them in the spaces beyond the stars, and I wondered whether I was visible to them. But they beckoned me. They spoke to me in sweet accents. Sometimes they warned me. For now and then the Devil sent impure and terrible faces with open mouths and strange eyes which still floated in fragments in the fringes of my vision. But those lovely figures carried me beyond their reach. And I worshipped them, loved them, sported with them. And sometimes I became one amongst them. They were gods and goddesses. What beauty in

their shining limbs, what appeal in their tender eyes of love as they met mine!

" Years passed and the procession of pure and shining figures never ended. But gradually, as meditation grew more exalted, I saw myself in the gods and the gods in me. The gods were seen to be made up of my own moods and aspirations, which came weling and surging in. My own impulses and desires bodied forth the forms of gods and goddesses known and unknown. The values I stored after were the gods, and these could no longer elude me as meditation became quick and effortless. Gradually the self and the gods retreated, and there arose the Cosmic Reality, eternal, perfect and serene. It comprehended everything and everybody. It included life and death, senseless motion and faithless rest. It looked back to the past. It was the living present. And it also looked to the future. It was both terrible and beneficent. Good and Evil were both there. The glow and radiance then ebbed away from my vision. Instead there arose a tender white luminance. The daily companions of my vision were no longer there. They only came when I longed for them. Instead the Cosmic Reality shone in all its serenity and eternity. I became one with the Cosmic Reality. For one year was naught. Life and death became the coming out and return into theathomless Womb. Yet I did not cease to think. I became Pure Intelligence. Then the earth and its processes became the reflection of Self. And I then pondered over my own being in a serene and passionate manner.

" But more often there welled up the desire to love. Then I sought Beauty and pervaded the wide, wide world with the heart of Love. In the secret of sap in the tree, in the vibration of an insect, in the agony of a dumb creature, in the degradation and suffering of man, I felt that a thread of my innermost being was touched. My life came to interpenetrate with the multitudinous life of the earth."

STAGES OR FORMS OF WORSHIP.—In elevated contemplation the meditation on the Larger Self is the one thing that always receives the greatest emphasis; all forms of meditation lead up to this. We have in India a classification of forms of worship which are graded according to this principle of direct or indirect approach to the Absolute or Cosmic Self.

(1) The worship of symbols (*Pratik* or *Adhyasa*), in which the worshipper is more clearly conscious of the symbol than of the object (*Brahman*) meditated upon or the process of meditation. This is the initial stage in the spiritual consciousness. Among the Sufis the first stage is the meditation of the name, which they call the illumination  names.

(2) Meditation upon some aspects of the Absolute (*Brahman*), e.g. the infinite character, vastness or some other attribute (*Sampan*). The symbol remains, but in meditation is considered identical with the Absolute. Thus

the symbol may be a small statue, a crystal image, or an idol; but in contemplation its form may pervade the Universe. The Sufis' second stage is called the illumination of the Attribute. Man receives illumination from the divine attributes in proportion to the power of receptivity possessed by him.

(3) The meditation of the Self, which is magnified as the Absolute (*Aksharabrahm*). Here the self-reference is prominent. The self-consciousness does not lose itself in the immanent consciousness. But the self is here "the Supreme Self", large enough to be free from the limitations which attach to anthropomorphic conceptions. It is thus that personality comes to its highest realization. The process is not absorption but identity; it is not impersonalism, for individuality is essential to human personality, but not to divine personality.¹ In the Absolute and the Whole, the true self is found rather than lost. Similarly, among the Sufis the third stage is characterized as the worshipper's identification with the Absolute Being. "He becomes the paragon of perfection, the object of worship, the preserver of the Universe."²

All these, however, represent worship of attributes of the Absolute or Supreme Self, and are considered as leading up to the meditation of Identity which is the supreme goal. According to the *Kalpateru*, those who cannot at once realize the undivided and transcendent consciousness of existence can acquire an aptitude and fitness in that direction by a sustained reflection upon the immanent existence (*Saguna Brahman*).³ The study of philosophy and sustained reflection and meditation on the Identity prepare the mind for the realization of the illimitableness of the empirical and oneness of the transcendental existence which is the summum bonum. But the strenuous control of mind which the above involves presupposes a control over the motor-mechanism and the nervous organization which the mystic acquires by the Yoga practice.

Two phases or stages of elevated concentration (*samādhi*) are clearly distinguished in this process :—

¹ For a discussion on Emerson, "System and Personality," *Journal of Religion*, November, 1931.

² *Ism-ah-kursh*, vol. I, p. 68; quoted in Iqbal, *Development of Mysticism in Persia*, pp. 147-8.

³ *Kalpateru*, pp. 55-6, quoted in Sumer, *The System of Vedantic Thought and Culture*.

(1) The stage in which the Self is approached in its essence as distinct from the modifications of consciousness and as witnessing the latter (described as *savikalpa samādhi*). Here the knowing subject, known object, and knowledge all remain as elements of consciousness. "As in a clay elephant man recognizes clay, so does the mystic see the self in the Brahman and the world," says Sankara.

(2) The higher stage, where there is no distinction in consciousness between the subject and object, where the consciousness is an integral whole and there is no modification thereof (described as *asamprajait samādhi*). The comparison here is that of the salt vanishing in water. Consciousness is not manifest as separate from the Brahman, which is the one single Is (Sat).²

For an illustration, we may adduce not the experiences of the rishis of the Upannada, nor Sankara's elucidations, but a sermon of the medieval German mystic Eckhart. His tractate *The Soul's Rage* clearly exhibits the contrasted dual states of mystical consciousness. In the first state, there is an identity between self and God, which however falls short of the soul's aspiration, for there still lingers a consciousness of the difference between Self and God's nature and a regret that "she (the soul) is not all that God is by nature, and has not all that God has by nature". This leads up to the second stage where the soul wishes to be not God but simply pure being in which God and the self together disappear. How strangely Upannadic is Eckhart's magnificent description of the soul's final experience!

"Without sound, for it is an inward perception in pure being; without light, for it is an apprehension beyond determination and opposites of the 'nothing' (not this, not that); without ground, for every attempt to love sinks radically away before the overwhelming miracle; without form, for the spirit then is informed by that which has neither form nor figure, by God himself. It is without essence, for her separate essence so completely disappears that there is nothing left but one single 'Is'. This 'Is' is the essence which is Being itself her own and that of all things."

This may be placed side by side with the following from the Upannada.

"Not by speech, not by thought, not by sight does one grasp Him. He is: by this word and not otherwise is he comprehended."

² Sankara's *Govar-Vallabha-Siddhanta-Samamgraha*, pp. 473-4.

It is a paradox that when thought is completely stilled and deprived of all self and world reference that it becomes most active. Such activity is universal knowledge or world manifestation. It is the self that knows the self. The experience of such knowledge of the transcendent is the same as the perception of the unseen. The Self is at once the transcendental witness as well as everything witnessed. Finally there is neither witness nor witnessed, but there is simply Is.

The *It* (*Satyam*) remains eternal, whether one apprehends it or not. It is without a second; it is the unity of the seer and seen, of consciousness and the world. The Is is one indivisible, impersonal consciousness. With reference to It there cannot arise any questions of non-duality or duality, of witness and the world. It is only to emphasize the relations of the Is to the ego consciousness that its wholeness and concreteness, its transcendence and its immanence in the world and mind are discovered. For there are truly no distinctions in the Is. It is free from all distinctions of duality and non-duality, of the part and the whole, although it cannot emerge except through the merger of these in the natural luminous Self, which is Itself.

Consciousness, like the world, is itself a spark of the luminous Self which, in its all-pervasiveness and fullness, brooks no distinctions of categories which are the essence of consciousness.

APPROACH TO THE ABSOLUTE.—The *Upanishads* declare that Brahman is All, the Whole, and the One. There is only one consciousness, namely the Cosmic Consciousness, and thus the idea of God or Cosmic Self is always presented before a man's mind in every perception by the ego.

"There is none that sees, but He. There is none that hears, but He. There is none that thinks, but He. There is none that knows, but He. He is thy Self, the inner Ruler, immortal."

The inference is that God is to be found, not by means of any objective use of the mind; not by the ontological, nor the cosmological, nor the biological argument, but by penetrating all the mental strata with which mankind's civilizing processes have overlaid man's divine nature.

"Neither the eye seeth not, the ear heareth not, nor mind. We know not, nor distinguish, how That may be thought. Different, indeed, That from the known, beyond the unknown. Thus have

we heard from the Elders, they who instruct us. That who existeth not by the voice, but That by whom the voice existeth, That know then as Brahman, not thus which is worshipped as this. That who thinketh not with the mind, but by whom the mind thinketh. That know then as Brahman, not thus which is worshipped as this. That who seeth not by the eye, but by whom the eye seeth. That who heareth not by the ear, but by whom the ear heareth. That who liveth not by the life, but by whom the life liveth. That know then as Brahman, not thus which is worshipped as this."

And the emphatic assertion of man's freedom is contained in the celebrated aphorism, "Thou art That."¹

IDENTIFICATION WITH GOD.—In the mother-cults where rituals and symbols play so prominent a part, it is asserted and reiterated that the worshipper should hold in mind that "he is himself the Goddess, and that there is nobody else". "When a man identifies himself with the object of worship he attains the cosmic self. 'I am the Goddess': this contemplation is the method of realisation." Again: "Those who make a difference in mind between the self and God, cannot see God, and labour in vain."² "Those who worship an external God, forsaking the Self-Goddess, search for God in vain, like one who runs after glass letting go the jewel in his hand."

From this we see that the ideal of the mystic is to rise from an attitude of reverence, love, and devotion, which satisfies his dominant impulses, to an identity-consciousness which is the highest phase of self-assertion. There are mystics who delight in the consciousness of duality. The emotions in this phase are deeply stirred and appear and reappear in exuberant variety on the ideal plane. The mystic here enjoys a communion with God, but holds himself separate. God also changes his moods and satisfies the whole gamut of human impulses and desires. In some moods, again, the mystic loses himself in the object of love and worship. Even here "the sense of freedom of the autonomous self" is heightened. This is, indeed, the paradox of mysticism: duality in unity, the branch in the vine, Self in self, "I live yet not I," "Lost in God, in Godhead found." The mystic's consciousness gradually becomes free from fluctuations and he acquires sobriety and serenity. The self expands and finds a Supreme

¹ *Yajñ Mahārudraṃśaṭṭha Samit: Hindu Mysticism According to the Upanishads*, chapter vii, for the interpretation of Tatvamasi.

² Quoted in *Bhikṣu Tārānaga*.

Self; there dominates an enveloping, all-pervasive consciousness which must not be misinterpreted in terms of impersonality, but which in reality is the supreme realisation of personality.

The following experience of Baba Khwî of Shiraz illustrates the transition :—

"In the market, in the closter—only God I saw.
In the valley and on the mountain—only God I saw
Him I have seen beside me oft in tribulation,
In favour and in fortune—only God I saw.
In prayer and fasting, in praise and contemplation,
In the religion of the Prophet—only God I saw
Neither soul nor body, accident nor substance,
Qualities nor causes—only God I saw.
I open'd mine eyes and by the light of His face around me
In all the eye discovered—only God I saw.
Like a candle I was melting in His fire,
Amidst the flames outshining—only God I saw,
Myself with mine own eyes. I saw most clearly,
But when I looked with God's eyes—only God I saw.
I passed away into nothingness. I vanished.
And lo! I was the all-being—only God I saw."

EXTENDING THE ABSOLUTE.—The abiding presence of God satisfies the totality of the mystic's impulses and interests, resolves inner conflict, and brings serenity. His mental reflexes assume greater reality than the passing shadows of the exterior world; his experiences and feelings transcend space and time, and the feeling of a finite self diminishes. Individuality along with other aspects of existence becomes mere appearance, and his mind looks beyond all relativities to the Absolute, the Whole, the One, the Larger Self, beyond the conditioned to the unconditional. Reflection, criticism, and discrimination all play their part here till at last the mystic reaches a state of consciousness in which there is no fear or ignorance, no isolation or self-absorption of imperfect selfhood, but the self establishes itself in its supreme glory. In his complete identification with Reality, when knowing in the sense of knowing something other than self ceases, man achieves the sense of discovery. He beholds the atom through the atom in the atom, the self in and with all and the one.

There is a type of mysticism in which speculation about the inner self or soul is everything. Thus in the Indian Yoga system the object of mystical intuition is the attainment of the

kaivalyam and *nirvāṇam* of the *ātman*, the eternal aloneness and glory of the soul. The Buddhist, Mahayāna, and Zen schools of mysticism also emphasize the knowledge and liberation of the self. Yet the Ved, *Nirvāṇa*, Tao, and *Anatman* supplied a vital and dynamic principle which stimulated the mood and imagination of Chinese and Japanese mystics and their experience of mystery in the world-order (*samsara*) and of beauty in the realm of nature. Similarly the mysticism of the Upaniads grounded itself not merely on the speculation relating to the Brahman, as the one, all-absorbing, and omnipresent Being, but also on the identity between Brahman and *Ātman*. In the mystic formula *Aham Brahma* *Ami. Aham Aham Brahma* (I am Brahman. This soul is Brahman), we have a new insight and wonder of inexpressible content added to the fullness of knowledge of ego, a profound synthesis by which the knowledge of the oneness of the soul is enriched and deepened. This finds a vivid expression in Sankara's description of his mystical illumination in the *Ānnapradāhopenishad*. Though, according to Sankara, *Ātman* and Brahman are interchangeable categories, *ānubhava* or illumination of the ego seems to have received greater emphasis.

"My Negation is dissolved, I am not consciousness itself stripped of all fullness.
My sense of individuality is wiped, the cause of the distinction between the individual and the universal self has been lost to me.
I am not distinct from the absolute self, injunctions and prohibitions of religion do not apply to me.
The perception of the different stages of empirical existence is strangled in me—I am now consciousness of bliss in widest commonality spread.
I am distinct from a witnessing consciousness,
I am fixed and established in my own glory.
I am devoid of old age, and decay, I am above the strife of soul-tending parties.
I am alone, and content, I am the very image of 'purity' and 'Nirvāṇa'.
I am without a body or birth, I am only the essence of Being, I am pure, I am one without a second, I have lost the threefold abode, I am enlightened and free, I am a wonder of existence.
I am pure, the innermost corner of myself, I am eternal consciousness, I am the ultimate truth, I am the very image of consciousness and bliss."

The free flight of mystical consciousness, which stops at nothing short of the identification of the ultimate truth with

the mystic's own being, of the only possible form and mode of existence of the Being with his own pure consciousness, engenders confidence and independence which the mere rationality of metaphysics cannot bestow. Keyserling draws in this connection a distinction between the results of the philosophies of India and the West. Both speak of the Absolute. But whereas this concept means a certain stage of abstraction for the West, it means to the Indian rendering an experienced subjective condition objective. It is, therefore, not a question of identity but incommensurability. The pure self is not a rational idea to the Indian, but the description of an attainable level of consciousness. Real knowledge does not come from reflection or ratiocination (*lakhs*), but from the intuitus mysticus, *Samayabodhasanam*. "We have," observes Keyserling, "in every Western philosophy a systematic contact held together by the laws of reason, where limits are, on the one hand, phenomenal activities, on the other the extremest possible abstraction; we have in Indian philosophy an empirical description of the possible ascent of the soul from lower to higher forms of existence."

ULTIMATE OF MYSTICISM.—The meditation of self as pure, eternal, and absolute is the last phase of mystic consciousness. Kabir sang: "When I sink, the world sinks with me." "I am eternal consciousness" in the largest and fullest sense in *acosmism* is the highest self-affirmation which we find in the highest type of religious experience true to the needs of human nature. Perfected intuition must transcend place or time, must be without a natural centre or personal perspective. It is by the thorough renunciation of self-assertion and theft, of the sense of its own or any other separable existence, that the self passes into that which it seeks. What appears to unspiritual apprehension to be annihilation is the supreme fulfilment, intellectually and morally. Where the self exists, it is bound by the limits of space or time, by flux, percept, and scale of values. Where the self thinks, it regards only some centre, eternal and non-existent, a more or less ample manifestation of Pure Being. Says Santayana:—

"The artist and the naturalist may dwell at pure and infinite Being, and may deviously and limit it in their own spheres to their heart's content; but understanding also has license to be; it,

tion, is free to choose a good and perhaps to realize it; and it may weave again all those diversities and contrasts into the seamless but many-coloured garment which wraps Brahma in his alumber. There no praise or disparage can intrude; all this flutter of spirits escapes from it unheeded and returns to it unaltered."¹

Christianity has emphasized self-fulfilment as the keynote of its mysticism, which was originally and has remained prevailingly personal though, of course, mystics of the impersonal type are not entirely absent. In Eastern mysticism, as also in Neo-Platonism or Spinozism, the monistic and pantheistic trends of thought dominate, but these by no means imply the loss of personality in the Abyss, the Absolute, the All, the Whole, or the Beyond—terms which are frequently met with in mystical literature. On the other hand, the same illumination, strength, and holiness which the Christian mystic acquires through the realization of the presence of Jesus, the Ideal Person, accrue also to the Eastern mystic. Mystics of the distinctively personal type are certainly not wanting in the various schools of religious thought in the East; but, generally speaking, the stream of asceticism is more impressive, and here the keynote is the expression of the Supreme Self through breaking the barriers of isolation of imperfect selfhood. "I am only the essence of Being," is, indeed, the recovery of the perfect selfhood. The only great religion which seemed to have preached denial of the self is Buddhism. But the concept of *Nirvana* is variously interpreted and there are scriptural contradictions—*Nirvana* annihilation, *Nirvana* immortality, and *Nirvana* a prohibited problem—which are to be accepted as they are. Buddhist scholars also refer to early important texts which affirmed the existence of a Self, under the name of *Pudgala* (an individual), and are of opinion that the ancient Buddhist tradition was not clear as regards the nature of *Nirvana*. Positively of the state there is asserted happiness or holiness of release or enlightenment. "*Nirvana* is happiness," Sariputta asserts, and when questioned how that can be when feeling does not exist, he asserts that it is happiness because there is no feeling.² This suggests that fulfilment of the higher life, rather than negation, is characteristic of the final intuition. The Buddha adapted his teaching to the intellectual and moral capacity

¹ *The Realm of Emance*, p. 65.

² Quoted in Kock's *Buddhist Philosophy*.

of his hearers, and this explains many contradictory strands of thought. Potemkin explains that permanence, self, bliss, or *Nirvana* are so many useful falsehoods. But for them one would give up religious life. Selflessness wrongly understood would lead to the wrong view that there is no survival. The doctrine of annihilation in *Nirvana* would originate despair and distrust. The following parable, quoted by Yamakami Sogen and translated in verse by Professor M. Chuah from Dhanapala's Chinese version of *Kashyapa Parivarta*, vividly portrays the simple man's plight:—

- "There lived of old a simple man;
He was so frightened of the sky,
Either and neither oft he ran
Lest o'er him it should drop from high.
- "But heaven's high dome, no limit has
And none can hurt below.
Through ignorance, indeed, it was
The poor man trembled so.
- "Be it so, as you may deem,
With teachers by weak judgment led:
'The world is void' when thus they teach,
Their hearts are full of dread.
- "They wrongly think: 'If that be true,
Void, too, it follows, is the soul;
Be whatsoever on earth we do
Still nothingness must be its goal.'"

It thus appears that the Buddha purposely did not avoid some of these contradictions, and, when a plain answer was demanded once of him by a bold and zealous inquirer he simply and briefly said: "You shall not know." The important part in early Buddhism was not the doctrine, but the Path, Sanctity. It is well known that Mahayāna Buddhism dismissed not the doctrine of *Nirvana*, but *Nirvana* as a practical ideal, by bringing to the front the ideal of Buddhahood, which is to be reached after a severe, protracted, discipline of penance of compassion. *Nirvana* in the Mahayāna philosophy was not a state of non-existence, which was an impossibility as long as one had to reckon with the actual facts of life, but an affirmation beyond opposites of all kinds.¹ Enlightenment in the Pure Land School of Mahayāna Buddhism also seems to imply the destruction of

¹ Suzuki, *Essays on Zen Buddhism*, p. 67.

the illusory limitations of personality and something positive, viz. the merging of the individual into the Supreme. Says Shinran, the founder of the evangelical Shin-shū sect in Japan :—

" He who is in all things supreme is Himself Nirvana, and Nirvana is that true light that abideth in the land that is to come." ¹

The constant endeavours of the mystics to reach the Absolute, the Whole, or the Beyond, are not to get away from selfhood, but to recover the true Self, free from all limitations that belong to anthropomorphic conceptions. As the Self is face to face with Itself in its innermost chamber beyond time and space, and the play of desire, feeling, and thought, the supreme truth is revealed, the apprehension of unity behind the many both in outward and inward spheres. This is neither *racism*, nor *pantheism*, nor consciousness of unity in the Western sense, for the impartial recognition of manifoldness does not suffer. For the mystic the wealth of the world of the senses or of appearance is not destroyed, but becomes one branch of the vital tree of the profound spirit.

The religious contemplation here is also not incompatible with a life of useful activity. But the mystic at this stage is always serene and peaceful. He loves but loves not, acts but acts not. The *Upanishad* describes two birds with beautiful plumage, which are associated with each other as friends. One eats the sweet fruits of the fig-tree; but the other abstains from eating and looks on. That is the distinction between the Universal and Subjective Self. When one has attained the highest knowledge he retains his consciousness but not individuality. He yet looks on the world.

¹ Quoted in Part, *The Pathways of Buddhism*, p. 402.

CHAPTER XVI

CONSECRATION OF SENSE AND EXPERIENCE

BUDDHISM A RELIGION OF COMPASSION.—A religion is to be judged also by the contribution of the mystic consciousness to social experience and heritage. Sometimes, however, the mystic enjoys alone the sweetness of his communion with God, or refuses to be disturbed in the sublime height of his *Nirvanic* calm. Yet there is no doubt that the highest stage of mystical consciousness is not one of intoxication or detachment, but of active participation in the daily round of individual and social duties. According to the system of Vedantic culture among the Hindus, the man who has obtained perfect knowledge and reached a stage of transcendental existence, has a twofold duty. First, he must preserve his identity-consciousness in his conduct in daily life so that no doubt may arise. Secondly, it is his duty to teach, and thereby contribute to the transmission of the supreme knowledge to posterity for the good of humanity. Buddhism is for the most part an individual creed. It formulates the ideal of attaining for one's self the place of safety, namely *Nibbāna*, with little heed to the condition of others. In the *Dhammapadam* we read :—

"Come not to strive thy own high goal to gain,
Through thought for others, be they never so great."

But the different stories of supreme self-sacrifice as recorded in the *Jātakas*, e.g. the story of the Bodhisattva offering his own body to a tigress in order to save her and her young from death by hunger, or of Prince Vessantara's self-immolation, always kept alive abundant pity and sympathy. Paul Dahlke appropriately remarks: "The suffering brought before us in the *Jātakas* is, as it were, the surrogate for actual pain; it is a kind of crucifixion in effigy." The School of Northern Buddhism, however, definitely stressed the ideal of a boundless compassion for all creatures. It set up the example of Avalokiteśvara

Bodhisattva, who refused to accept his Nirvana, though fully entitled to it, until all creatures of the world were in possession of supreme knowledge and had obtained freedom from all sufferings. Each individual is to become a Buddha by practising deeds of compassion on a large scale, by spreading the doctrine and above all by helping to lead all living beings from pain to the place of painlessness. In Taranath's *History of Indian Buddhism* we have the story of the supreme sacrifice of the monk Aryasamgha, who cut a piece of flesh of his own body to save a suffering street dog, the lower part of whose body was eaten and gnawed by worms. The future Buddha appeared before him moved by his penance of great compassion, and the monk prayed to him that he might work for the spreading of the Mahayana teaching and the salvation of all creatures. According to the Mahayana, thousands and thousands of strenuous and charitable lives are necessary for a man to become a Buddha. After reaching Buddhahood ■ may seek Nirvana. Thus Nirvana as a meditative ideal was relegated to the background, and a discipline of charity and social service to all living creatures was emphasised. In inspired and fervent words Santideva, the famous exponent of the Mahayana system, thus describes the supreme dedication of the Bodhisattva :—

"By virtue of the merit which I have acquired through good deeds, may I bring salvation to the cottages of all creatures. May I be the medicine to the sick. May I be their physician and their nurse so long as their malady endures. May I be a protection unto those that need it, a guide to such as have lost their path in the desert, and a ship and a ford and a bridge to those who seek the farther shore. And may I be a lamp unto those that need light, a bed of repose to those that want rest, a servant to all the creatures requiring service."

The Mahayanaist's compassion for the suffering of humanity thus actuates him to renounce his merits, or even his salvation; but he ■ able thereby to remove the veil covering the transcendental truth and become omniscient. This is explained in the *Tattva-Saagrah* as follows :—

"The individual meditates the Universe as his own self, induced by his feeling of compassion. He meditates on the vivification of the universe (*anantanga*) and destroys the ego and its connection with the surrounding objects, which are regarded as unreal, as also sufferings which are only the outcome of thinking the ego as real."

* B. Bhattacharyya, *Tattva-Saagrah*, Foreword, p. xiv.

Omniscience here accordingly becomes active for the benefit of all.

PLACE OF ASCETICISM IN HINDUISM.—An experience by no means uncommon has been, however, that the mystic finds a life of active service a hindrance to his ecstasy or meditation. So he shuns the world, which he relegates to the Devil. The sense of impurity of the world and the flesh is particularly dominant in the early stages of the mystic life, when the novice has not been able yet to subdue and tame his desires. It is for this reason that most religions have their stages of initiation and preparatory discipline, which are meant to overcome the impulses by abstinence and train the subconscious. In no religion was greater austerity imposed than in ancient Brahmanism. Buddhism, in its emphasis of quiet and patient subjective illumination, did not idealise penance. The Buddha preached asceticism as far as it contributed to the cleansing of the heart. He himself pictured vividly his own severe penances, adding the warning that with all this rigorous mortification he came no jot nearer to the rich supernatural felicity of clearness of knowledge. What he emphasised was the burning away of all conditions of the heart that are evil. One who does so is a true ascetic. This has been really the true Indian idea: what the Buddha preached against was the extremes of ascetic practices in all times. Buddhism often compares the mind to the restless and greedy ape, which is to be conquered by proper and persistent training.

"Just as an ape in the forest, rearing through the woodland, slatches a bough, lets go and clutches another, so is what is called *chitta*, that is mind . . . ever changing as it rises and falls."

Again:—

"Within the little two-dogged hat an ape
Doth prout, and round and round from door to door
He bows, rattling with blows again, again . . .
Halt, ape! run thou not forth! for thou
'Tis not hence as it was wont to be
Reason doth hold thee captive. Nevermore
Shalt rove for hence (in freedom as of yore)!"

OVERCOMING OF SIN.—Indeed, the doctrine of self-control with a varying coefficient of asceticism is common to all religions. While an intellectual or philosophical religion combats the impulses and desires more with the mental

analysis of the "Know Thyself" gnomon, others with the averted gaze of faith appeal chiefly to emotion and will.¹ In the emotional approaches to God the sense of a Divine Presence is so strong that even the senses and desires are transmuted. The burden of sin is gracious; neither good deeds nor knowledge, neither Yoga-meditation nor asceticism can avail against it. Only by the water of faith and love is the interior stain effaced. This is the creed of the emotional religionist everywhere.

Thus Manikka Vamshar cries :—

"None but myself has sunk myself.

Thy name be ever praised

No blame lay I on thee, leads to my Master be upraised !

Yet to forgive is eye a mark of greatness.

Praise to Thee :

Lord of the land whistled, praise ! O end this life for me."

"Whether I praise or curse Thee, O! I'm stayed with me and sorrowing

Yet, wilt Thou leave me ? Splendour shroug like the red-hued coral mount,

Master, thou driestest poison black, the humber brings pitying,

That I, Thy moment one, might find no power, but a secret fount."

CONSECRATION TO GOD.—As the sense of sin diminishes, impulses and desires themselves become for the emotional religionist devotional offerings to God. He seeks neither self-indulgence nor asceticism, but dedicates his whole being to God. Ekanath, the mystic saint of Maharashtra, stresses that the worshipper does not forsake the things of sense, but consecrates them to God, thereby purging them of evil,

"Whenever the eye sees the visible then (the worshipper) sees there God Himself. Thus by the means of worship he offers up his vision, namely the objects that he sees. In like manner, when he hears with his ear, it is an offering to Brahman. Without deliberate intent, know thou spontaneously and naturally God is worshipped. He who brings together *swad* and the thing that has scent, he becomes (to the worshipper) the very scent of smell by reason of love. When the sweets of taste are tasted, then its flavour is God Himself. He abides in the delight of taste and (the worshipper) perceives that the enjoyment of taste is an offering to Brahman. When by our body we touch, then in the body the unembodied self is worshipped. Whatever (the worshipper) touches and whatever he enjoys, it is an offering to Brahman. Wherever he (the worshipper) sets his feet, that path is God. Then, in every step he takes, he has worship as an offering to Brahman."

¹ Mrs. Edgar Davis, *Madness Psychology*, p. 88.

Hallaj, the cotton-cumber and mystic, explains in a similar strain :—

"Thy will be done, O my Lord and Master ;
Thy will be done, O my purpose and meaning,
O essence of my being, O goal of my desire,
O my speech and my hands and my gestures,
O all of my all, O my knowing and my sight,
O my whole and my element and my particles "

SAKTI, DIVINE ENERGY, MOTHER-ASPECT OF THE ABSOLUTE.—The transmutation of the world and the flesh which the mystic's vision or ecstasy effects is sought in some religions through a prolonged and persistent discipline of withdrawal of the senses from the objects of enjoyment with which the worshipper deliberately surrounds himself. This is the distinctive feature of the Yoga of the Saktas, or worshippers of the Divine Energy, who form a numerous body in the East. The background of the worship of Energy (Sakti) is philosophic monism. The Absolute is here worshipped in its Mother-aspect. In the *Navaratristava* we read : "That Devi, who is existence, consciousness and bliss, should be thought of as a female or as a male, or as pure Brahman." The Absolute in its manifested aspect is Energy. Energy is conceived in the Indian languages in the feminine gender. The reason is that the female sex is the symbol of delight, sport, and creation. In the Indian tradition the Eternal Feminine has reperpetrated all forms of Creative Expression, whether it underlies the play of the senses or the mind of God. Once the Goddess asked : "O God ! Tell me whose name is Energy and who is Siva." The God answered : "O Goddess ! Energy dwells in the fluctuating and Siva in the calm mind. One whose mind is calm obtains salvation even in his own body (Yogendra)." In the *Devī Bhāgavat* we read that Brahman asked the Primal Energy whether she was male or female. The Mother answers :—

"That Male (Purusha) and Myself are ever the same. There is no difference between Him and Me. The Purusha is what I am ; I am what the Purusha is. The one without a second, perennial Brahman, becomes a dual at the time of creation. A single lamp becomes dual by difference of Upadhi (condition) as a single face becomes dual in the form of an image in the mirror, as a single body appears in dual form with its shadow ; even so our images are many owing to the difference of upadhi (which are made up of *Ākṣa*). O Aja (undown), for the purpose of creation the difference arises at the time of creation. It is only the difference between the seen

and the women. At the time of final dissolution I am neither male nor female, nor neuter. The difference (male and female) is imagined only at the time of creation."

In Her supreme form the Mother of the Universe is one with the Absolute and "none knows Her". But the Mother appears in Her female form in all things manifest. Indeed, She Herself is both the manifest and the manifestation. Thus the universe is the world-body of the Mother. Her play is world-play. Her eyes, playing like fish in the beautiful waters of Her Divine face, open and shut with the appearance and disappearance of countless worlds, now illumined by Her light, now wrapped in Her terrible darkness. One's own Self is the Goddess in Her playful mood, whose body is the Universe. As mere manifestation She is white. When She is the mind, Her colour becomes red which indicates wish and activity. Worship is the meditation on this.

CONCEPTS OF TWO ENERGIES.—As Creative Energy is everywhere in everything which is apparent to us, mind and senses in their varying forms are each in their abstract aspect particular forms of Energy. The whole Universe is informed by and is the manifestation of Energy. But a particularly named goddess is that Energy in the particular manifestation to which the name is given. The worshipper looks upon each part of activity of his body and mind as an Energy or Goddess, or more simply at earlier stages as presided over by a Goddess. "An elementary view is to regard, say, the mind, as something apart, over and governing which is a Goddess or Energy. The more experienced and correct view is that the Mind is Energy, that is, a particular manifestation of it."

By constant and earnest suggestion and reference of the Goddess to the Universe, to mind, and to the objects of sense, the worshipper rises to the feeling that all things, including things of enjoyment like food, drink, or sex, are mere symbols. Sex, for instance, is a mere fragment of the one Primordial Energy. It is in this manner that enjoyment ceases to be enjoyment. In the conception of the woman as the Mother of the Universe, sexual love itself becomes transmutated, while food and drink cease to be objects of sense when consecrated by the Divine communion. The Scripture warns:—

"He goes to hell who drinks unspiced wine and takes food that has not been dedicated to the gods. The partaking of flesh, meat, wine, and other things which man consumes at time other

than those of worship, is sinful. A man commits an outrage upon his own wife when he approaches her without realizing that She is the Supreme Energy who seeks union with his Self. He who withdraws the senses from their objects and unites them with Self is a true meat-eater. Others are mere slaughterers of animals. He who enjoys the bliss arising from the union of Primal Energy with Self has true sex love; others are mere addicts to sex enjoyment."

Therefore the spiritual worth of a man who can consecrate the world and the flesh, which are too much with us, can stand the ordeal better than that of one who flees from them. Thus the *Kulavakra Tantra* declares:—

"The Great God has ordained as the doctrine for adepts that a spiritual advancement must be achieved by means of those very things which are the causes of man's downfall."

And, again:—

"O Mistress of the Adept! In the religion of the Adept enjoyment becomes complete union of subjective self with the super-self, bad deeds are made good deeds and the world becomes the seat of salvation."

WORSHIP OF CREATIVE ENERGY.—The above is the broad general principle of the worship of Creative Energy, which elicits the deepest reverence throughout a large portion of Asia. A faith of erotic mysticism or a mere opening of the gates of hell could not certainly be so widespread and persistent. This religion prescribes different rituals and practices, discriminates the fit and the unfit worshipper, and holds out a promise for the feeble and the timid who can acquire by such means strength of will and purity of desires. It is instinct with symbolism which has for its purpose the withdrawal of the senses from their objects, so that elevated contemplation and enjoyment may exist harmoniously and enjoyment be divested of its instinctive, coarse, or brutish character. The worshipper makes abundant use of mystic formulae and diagrams, consecrated pots and jars, ritual gestures made with the fingers, ritual movements with the hands, which all promote the suggestion that the Divinity in its particular aspects presides over, or is, his mind or body, his particular senses or organs, desires or particular objects of desire. The dominating philosophical principle which informs the ritual is the idea which God himself has explained: "Think of yourself as the Divinity, as the manifestation of the Primal Energy. This you should do by your mind, by

your words and by your body." The ritual movements of the hands, as well as the different marks smeared on different parts of the body, bring about by a persistent process of suggestion the bodily worship, and then the conception that the body is itself the vehicle of the Goddess. This leads us to another dominating principle of the Tantra, namely that the human body is a microcosm, containing in miniature all that is contained in the cosmos. The meditation of diagrams, which represent both the body of the worshipper as the Microcosm and the whole Universe, leads up to this.

PHYSIOLOGY OF THE AROMAL OF SAKTI.—Another important principle which underlies the worship is derived from the Hatha-Yoga. Indeed, this worship begins with the desires and emotions, and ends in Yogic meditation. It is by awakening subtle Yoga nerves, nerve centres, and inter-central nerves by means of local concentration that the worshipper gains power over both his body and mind, and ultimately succeeds in attaining a formless meditation. The worshipper is asked to concentrate his mind in six great centres or circles of energy situated in his trunk, the one above the other. Each of these is described as the lotus, and the mind should travel like an ant from one lotus to another. This involves different stages of mystic consciousness. The Primordial Energy lies asleep like a coiled serpent, thin as the finest fibre of the lotus stem, but more brilliant than a multi-million suns. "This power will ever be buzzing like an angry female serpent. It will ever rear its head aloft. It is the cause of the fluctuation which takes place in the mind. All the other nerves are connected with this." It is the awakening of this Serpent Energy through meditation and its ascent from the lowest lotus to the highest situated in the crown of the head, that are deemed absolutely essential for elevated contemplation. Some physiologists identify the Serpent with the vagus nerve, which plays a very significant function in Yogic meditation, the six lotuses being certain important plexuses of the sympathetic portion of the autonomic nervous system.¹ It appears that the characteristic bodily postures and exercises lead to the contraction of the thoracic and abdominal muscles of the heart, etc., which induces a general circulatory and respiratory disturbance.

¹ V. C. Rish, *The Mysterious Kundalini*.

This leads to the stimulation of the sympathetic nervous system over which normally man has no control. The mystic seeks control of the vaso-motor system by stimulating it at its endings or at its centre under induced conditions of tension and co-ordination for eliciting a set or drive and utilizes certain patterns of neuro-muscular spread. Through a postural scheme and exercises and through distribution of attention specific sets and attitudes are facilitated.

THE ASCENT OF CREATIVE ENERGY.—The ascent of the Serpent and the traversing of the six "chakras" represent the sequential arousal of organic sensations in a particular order. Thus the first level of experience consists in the organic sensations of the reproductive system. Such sensations would normally be accompanied by emotions irrespective of the theories of the genesis of emotions we adopt. An emotive-organic complex of experiences would normally be the focus of motor tendencies. But these spiritual practices demand as a cardinal principle the inhibition of all motor expression. Hence the emotive complex would tend to express itself through symbolic projection. The goddesses of Tantricism are but such projected symbols. This explains the conception of goddesses presiding over the functions of sex, anger, greed, mind, and the senses, egoism, reason, and memory, as also over the five senses and pure joy and consciousness which we find in some Tantras.

There is, however, another process of transformation of these inhibited organic tendencies. An inhibition of this type would normally create widespread organic disturbances in other vital functions such as those of the circulatory and respiratory systems. The experiences which emerge at the outset of meditation are expected to fuse with those that would be aroused later on in a more intensive form. That such blending is possible is maintained by the anxiety neurosis in which the inhibited sex impulse is disguised by the more intensive digestive, cardiac, and peripheral muscular disturbances. But in Tantrik and other religious contemplation of this type the intensity and the serial arousal differ from the ordinary organic disturbances caused by inhibition in the fact that the practitioners insist on the regulation of the sequence through attentional control. Thus the attention passes from the level of the genitals upwards vivifying the

successive groups of organic functions and experiences. The earlier experiences in the series, balked in their motor manifestation, would in this way blend with the later experiences intensified through concentration. The ultimate consummation of the sequence of experiences is to synthesize the diverse orders of impulses regarded as so many sources of energy (*hormes*) into a unitary whole, which may be under the control of the devotee. Energy integrated and transformed in this manner would transcend space and time since the impulses cease to be directed to specific objects and to follow a specific time sequence. This is symbolically represented as the Supreme Energy (*Mahakali*), transcending Space and Time, and the consummation of worship consists in the complete identification of personality with the Goddess, the Absolute.

Once such transformation is achieved, all feelings and values, thoughts and imagines, are viewed as but phases in the integral energy process of which the specific *hormes* are but specialized manifestations. Sex and other enjoyments are viewed as momentary sports of energy and thus cease to be merely sensual and acquire a holiness and a spiritual significance.

It is interesting to note that even in Hindu images of gods in temples we sometimes have a representation of the lotuses, and in some Buddhist images a snake coils round the Buddha's limbs. The penetration of the six lotuses is, indeed, a part of an old and widespread Yogic tradition. Some of the Sufi fraternities taught that there are six great centres of light of various colours in the body of man. Such centres have to be moved or made current through the body till the worshipper realises, amidst the apparent diversity of colours, the fundamental colourless light which makes everything visible and is itself invulnerable.³ It is in this manner that the worshipper's self becomes identified not merely with Formless Energy or Colourless Luminance, but also with that Mother in all physical functions and acts. Nothing then is unholy or unacceptable. Everything is a particular Energy. Through the different rituals, observances, and forms of meditation the worshipper is gradually led to realise that all these particular Energy-Goldstones are, as it were, fragments of the

³ *Light, Development of Mysticism in India*, p. 120.

one Energy, which is the Primeal Divine Energy, and that the worshipper himself, both in his super-self and in his mind and body, which are particular aspects of the Goddess, is one with the Supreme Mother. This is the culmination of the philosophy of the Absolute. Reaching this stage, the worshipper exclaims: "She I am. I am the Goddess. I am none else. I am free."

ASCENT FROM PARTICULAR GODDESSES TO THE ONE MOTHER.—We now see that the worshipper worships all forms as particular Goddesses; he is then led up from lower to higher forms of Energy until he places before himself for worship, and finally completely identifies himself with, the Supreme Power who is both the Mother of all these Particular Energies, and who appears in, and as, them and himself. For there is nothing but the One Mother.

It is not a matter of surprise that we have in some of the Tantras most elaborate and exhaustive ideal representations of organic sensations, impulses, and desires as well as higher mental states in the form of particular Energy Goddesses. The objects of the senses and desires to which man seeks normal adjustment are translated to the ideal and the imaginary plane. Thus the goddesses of the senses, emotions, and desires fulfil the impulses and the desires themselves. Impulses of sex and self-assertion, so troublesome to the heart, are thus completely fulfilled on the ideal plane. The scripture says: "The worshipper should worship the particular goddesses by becoming the selves of those goddesses, and fully absorb the feeling or attitude of the mind (*bhāva*) which the latter represent." A host of responses and attitudes is prescribed by the ritual in relation to the various goddesses. The worshipper who undergoes particular forms of behaviour in an order or system is responded to appropriately by the goddesses concerned. In this way is established a reciprocal behaviour between the worshipper and the goddesses which leads gradually to mental satisfaction and equipoise.

RITUAL OF THE GODDESSES.—It is impossible to explain the above principles to those who are not conversant with the elaborate ritual and mode of worship. But a brief analysis of the ritual as prescribed by the *Tantrāsāhita* Tantra may serve as an illustration. Here the diagram that is worshipped

represents the human body and the whole universe and man (for what is in the former is in the latter and vice versa) as also the Brahman-Energy Form or Self. It is thus the symbol of the Great Goddess in Her own form and as She is in the form of the universe. The diagram is composed of nine triangles and circles, one within the other, until the central point is reached. The point is the Great Goddess, who is both subjective-self in man and the super-self in the universe. In the angles of the triangles, and in those formed by the intersection of the latter, we have particular goddesses representing various manifestations of the vital and mental functions and activities. A list of these will be sufficient to indicate the nature of the suggestion-process wrought by the diagram. The diagram through the suggestion-process is transformed into a pure mental state of the worshipper. The worshipper becomes the diagram and realises himself as such through the practical methods of meditation and discipline enjoined. To give examples, the worshipper, concentrating on the lines, curves, triangles, and petals, crowded by Energy Goddesses, meditates upon forms of sin and virtue, sex, anger, greed, jealousy, fascination, obstinacy, the mind and senses, the nerves, the vital air and fire; upon goddesses of egoism, intelligence, steadfastness, and memory; upon goddesses of sound, touch, vision, taste, smell; goddesses of joy, relinquishment, concentration, and detachment; goddesses of the cosmic intelligence and feeling; goddesses of the elements of the cosmic and the individual body; and, finally, upon the Brahman or God-Goddess which is the name of the Universal Energy, in which everything lives and moves. After worship in the prescribed manner, the devotee must consider himself as hks unto the Goddess and one with her. The meditation is from the exterior to the interior world, leading up from the lower to the higher Forms of Energy. The image at first is gross; then the Goddess becomes Word; and finally she is formless when the worship and the fruit thereof is offered to her. At this stage there is the identity of the knower, knowledge, and the object of knowledge. The worshipper is now his true Self, the Goddess, and he worships Himself; his body, which now wears the mantle of Supreme Energy, is the cosmos. The identity of the self and the Self is brought out in the words repeated over the

diagram: "The act of offering is Brahman. The offering itself is Brahman. Into the fire which is Brahman offering is made by him who is Brahman. By him alone who is absorbed in the offering to Brahman is unity with Brahman attained."

SYMBOL OF THE SUPREME MOTHER.—God in this religious tradition is Energy, symbolised in Mother form which creates, which sustains, and which withdraws into her fathomless womb innumerable worlds, creatures, living and inanimate, in infinite space. She is both Space and Energy. Yet She is beyond Space and Time. She is transcendental, and her pre-eminent form cannot be known. In Tantrayana Buddhism Nirvāṇa is represented by Nirmāṇa Devī. The worshipper disappears in Her, through the annihilation of his feeling and cognition, as salt disappears in the sea. In the Buddhist *Devakīy* (Māharukha) Tantra, the Devatā as Method, which is Compassion, is united with his spouse, the Mahayoginī, Who is Wisdom which is the Void. Around these two in one are lesser goddesses, which form part of the body of the Supreme Goddess in whom by meditation they are merged. It is thus that the Mother Cult has assimilated into itself the doctrines of the void and the transcendental, which have failed adequately to meet the needs of the worshipper's heart. As Creative Energy, the Supreme Goddess is, however, the active immanent aspect, of the eternally static, transcendental Reality. In this form we worship her in all form and in all expression.

"Be gracious to me, O active and receptive of all matter and form,
Who art Activity in the form of the elemental world,
Lift of all that loves,
Whose very nature and will is to be and to do what she is and does,
That which we cannot understand,
Obedience to Thee is the form of sound and ether,
Salutation to Thee is the form of touch and air,
Obedience to Thee is the form of sight and fire,
Salutation to Thee is the form of taste and water,
Obedience to Thee is the form of earth with its quality of smell,
Salutation to Thee is the form of the ear, skin, eyes, tongue, and nose,
And in the form of mouth, arm, legs, organs of excretion and generation,
Salutation to Thee as Intelligence, Ego, and Mind,
Obedience to Thee who art the form of the Whole (Universe)!"

RAFFROCHERMENT OF SCIENCE AND RELIGION.—Modern science is now making us familiar with the idea that every-

thing in the world, the colour in the wings of a butterfly or the most stupendous machinery, the pure thought of a most beautiful woman or the destruction of a cathedral by a well-aimed shell, is the relation of one form of energy to another. Men and women, insects and food, earth and the stars, are caught in an all-pervasive, irresistible dance of energy. Now man everywhere seeks to express Reality in relation to his knowledge of the physical world, and of human nature.

Scientific method has for its objects the classification of facts, the comparison of their relationships and sequences, and, finally, the framing of some brief formulae or laws which do not represent, however, what the natural phenomena must of necessity obey. Indeed, as Hobson shows, it is unnecessary for the purposes of natural science to make the assumption that a single law has a precise correspondence with a single definite set of relations which actually subsist in Nature. Still less is it necessary for the purposes of natural science to assume that the law corresponds to a set of relations between real entities. As science progresses, it becomes more and more abstract. It gradually tends to become a great conceptual scheme arrived at by a process of abstraction in which some elements of our actual precepts are removed and not attended to. Science and Religion thus need not be in conflict and, indeed, they meet on common ground, if and when they both develop to symbolic conceptions. Science deals with one set of facts and religion with another. In the lower stages of both science and religion the forms and categories of thought are different in each case, but since they both rise to abstractions the reality is figured by natural science and religion by much the same kind of symbolism.¹ Before the Reality both sciences and religion stand mute and helpless. Now the conceptual scheme used by the worshippers of God as Creative Energy fits in well with the trend of scientific thought, which emphasizes that matter is a modification of energy, and that every action of everything, living or dead, is some form or other of atomic energy which fills the void. Science observes Reality as the dance of Energy. Religion holds exactly a similar view, but on a broader line of thought. In science Energy is a blind fury which has no regard for values of

¹ See Otto, *Things and Ideas*; also Hobson, *The Duration of Natural Science*, chapter I.

human life. In religion God, as Energy, forms the very synthesis of values.

GLORY OF CREATIVE ENERGY, THE MOTHER GOD.—In the Indian languages all human values and abstractions are expressed in the feminine gender. All things indicated by words in the feminine gender are manifestations of Goddess as Energy. Thus Goddess as Energy here creates, sustains, and destroys the universe. She is the infinite silence of the cosmos floating in the all-pervading waters of eternity, when all life and form have sunk back into the primal darkness. She is the Word which first breathed life into the cosmos. Her lips open and close day and night, like light and darkness. Her brow is adorned with the full moon. Her lustre is that of a thousand rising suns in the endless spaces of the universe. Her fathomless womb conceals innumerable worlds in infinite space. But She is also the meaning of life in terms of human emotions, desires, and achievement. As such She frees man from the bondage of ignorance. In conferring liberation She is Pure Intelligence. Her body is all the sciences and philosophies. But Her mind is inscrutable as the mystery of the universe. Hence the seers worship her as the Unknowable. As the bestower of prosperity She is bedecked with the treasures of all worlds. She is art in the altar of temples and cathedrals, in the dress of women, and in the embellishment of homes. In the thrill of love she is the sweet incarnation of man's desire, enchanting him with beauty and wine. She is synthetic activity and represents all the fine arts and embellishments that make life beautiful and enjoyable. She is sex love. She is family bliss. She is all the classes, professions, and means of livelihood. She is the Divine Mother who is peace, joy, beauty, and prosperity in the human world.

God is All Good. The most common prayer which religion offers to the Divine Mother is in this form: "Thou art the All Good and the source of All Good. Thou fulfillest all wishes and desires." The lotuses of creation float to and fro in the waters of space and the Primordial One, the Mother of countless worlds, resides amongst them.

God is the Eternal Maiden, fresh as a bunch of lotuses full blown, with her eyes like lotus swimming in the azure of the world-water. She looks at man with tender eyes, and

with the soft music of the evening zephyr in her words. As man's eyes run into hers and her lips vibrate on his lips, he sees her soul in him, and has in her. His sex is changed and everything in the world becomes sweet and tender.

God is Mother Love. In all tempests, with his tiny arms entwined round the Mother-neck, his tresses flung free in the breezes of time, man sleeps like a babe in Her firm embrace.

God is the Procreant Mother. Her dark tresses scatter innumerable sunless spaces whilst she dances her cosmic dance. All are in the dance, from the hugest sun to the smallest electrons, in all manner of gyrations. All kinds of spaces are covered by her fleet steps, and her changes are marked by blazing spots that move seamlessly through space at different rates with their changing perspectives of space-time.

As the Mother, God is Creative Energy manifest in mind and matter, in all Form, Beauty, and Expression. As Energy she evokes energy, and as Mother she evokes sacrifice—the sacrifice of the plant for the seed, of the animal for the offspring, of the man for the child and humanity, of the group for society, and of society for generations yet unborn.

God as Creative Energy is light, radiant heat, and gravity, the electrical continuum in which all worlds flow. She is the Divine love or understanding, the Womb of the Cosmos, the source from which issue varieties of space and time and energy, varieties of blazing or grey worlds, varieties of things, both mental and physical.

God as energy is sometimes awe-inspiring and terrible. She stuns the heart of youth to love and snatches away the beloved in her supreme self-will. She is the energy of destruction. When she flares up in anger, blazing suns fall as the scattered leaves of a tree from the cosmic system. Species of plants and animals, societies and civilisations fly back to her all-engulfing mouth in obedience to her awesome gesture.

God is the thread of the flower-garland woven by the senses, and it is She to whom this garland is offered by every activity of the senses.

PLACE OF SEX IN RELIGION.—When God is conceived as active immanence in mind and matter objects of sense and enjoyment become sacred themselves. God is present in the

wine-cup, or in the baptismal water. Indeed, bread and wine become the flesh and blood of the God himself, and demand reverence during the holy ceremony. In the same manner religion seeks to change all enjoyment into dedication, all pleasures into offerings, all deeds into sacrifices. Even that mighty, explosive energy, sex, from which asceticism flows, is transmuted. If it is true that man's instability of emotions and will is intimately connected with his sex life, and that neither man nor woman can reach the highest state of psychological development except in the closest possible association with one of opposite sex, religion must not disregard the sex relation. On the other hand, a practical religion naturally would include sex in its field. In a large part of the world the emotional and spiritual sympathy between man and woman is rare, and there is lack of adaptation to each other's subtle moods and expression. Thus marriage cannot rise to the spiritual level. The intimate association between man and woman in religious meditation, the recognition of sex, not as an evil to flee from but as an uplifting force to be utilised in a partnership of the spirit, raises sex adjustment from an instinctive level and marriage from a mere physiological contrivance. It fixes the greatest and best thing in man, earnest love, upon the supreme object, namely God. Man cannot achieve perfection if he leaves love out of account or distributes his life in segregated compartments of earthly affection and spirituality. Sex thus has to be evaluated in terms of religious experience. Therefore man will pray to be delivered not from sex but from its temptation; he will import into normal sexual life a religious partnership so that the moments of greatest intimacy will cease to be exciting, and a serene tranquillity and full vitality will be associated together without detriment to either. God is to be conceived as the one supreme Energy who is the passion of love as well as the abstraction of the most elevated meditation. Nothing is unholy, for God's feet are everywhere. "You are my Self. My will is Your consort. My vital airs are Your attendants. This body is Your home. All the paraphernalia of worldly enjoyment is Your ritual. Sleep is my ineffable union with Thee. As I walk I circumambulate You. All my words are hymns. Whatever I do, all that is Your worship." This is the supreme consecration.

GOD FOR ALL.—For the ignorant God is fetish, image, or ritual; for the wise God is mysterious and bears a thousand names. For the child God is a playmate; for the youth God is the sweet coy maiden of Love and Beauty. For the worldly God is the consecration of the flesh, and the art and ritual of the satisfaction of desires. For the leaders of men, God is the supreme embodiment of renunciation and self-sacrifice. For the aged God is the All and the Alone.

God's body is made up of man's deepest and most fervent desires and aspirations. In the depth of passion, in the serenity of knowledge, in the tensest moments of activity, God is with man. And when passion is frustrated and activity baffled by cruel Fate and Death, and man finds himself a castaway on the sands of time, he still worships God as the All-Good. When his knowledge quails before the thought that this Universe, the scene of his many triumphs and sufferings, must share the inevitable extinction of the solar system, God is still the All-True. God is the Eternal Dancer in all-engulfing Space and Time. Life and Death, Creation and Destruction are rhythmically pulsating patterns in His ever-supple, ever-flowing dance. Whilst He sweeps majestically over dark unfathomable space, a thousand worlds and beings spring up like lotuses and God lingers amongst them in a kiss, and his kiss is the beauty and hope of creation. When he swiftly turns back in the grandeur of sheer aimlessness a thousand worlds and beings return after their little day to his all-devouring mouth, and God is left Alone, Unpartnered. Then there is neither universe nor man, and God neither feels, nor thinks, nor dreams.

CHAPTER XVII

SOCIAL VALUES OF MYSTICISM

RELIGION NORMAL AND NECESSARY TO MAN.—Religion is an expression of normal human impulses and hence cannot be regarded as an affair of a few chosen or gifted individuals. In fact, the vital need of human nature which religious objects satisfy, the sanity and equanimity which these import to the individual suffering from psychic conflicts or strains, the consciousness of a transcendent joy or sublimity, and the knowledge of higher values with which all higher religious experiences are associated, all go to show that a man without religion is relatively weak and deficient. He has not developed an exceedingly effective tool of adaptation, wanting which he suffers in wholesomeness and vitality. Man is much greater than Society or Nature, and his superiority is shown by the world of values which his philosophy creates and his religion makes dynamic in his heart. Religion therefore involves the very summit of man's personality. Both Nature and Society have been personified at different stages of man's culture as Gods. Neither of them could satisfy man; for nothing can claim man's unqualified reverence which cannot rise above all relativities. The Philosophy of Nature or the Philosophy of Society subordinates man to laws which man does not acknowledge. Man is the ultimate arbiter of his own values. It is religion which creates and stabilizes values beyond all uncertainty or relativity. In the sphere of religion, then, man is inevitably concerned with the greatest realities which he can conceive. It is here that his affirmation is strongest, deepest, and most dynamic.

GODS, REPRESENTATIVES OF HUMAN AND SOCIAL VALUES.—Animism and Animatism represent the lowest stage of religion, when man sought in them an escape from an incomprehensible, mysterious Nature. Religion then was a refuge from reality rather than a means of control. Religious dogmas and doctrines were so many devices to make man's escape possible. There were strange and impersonal forces

which surrounded and dominated man, forces which were "arrested, lodged, and incarnated" in the totem, plant, or animal. Man thus finds an affinity and communion with a new sacred world. It is the latter that blends all his conflicting instincts and impulses, becoming at once inhibitive and inspiring, terrible and beneficent. All the taboos, precepts, and injunctions, without which family, social, and tribal organization cannot survive, are projected to this sacred world, hence the totemic name is to be regarded as deified ancestors, generating and guardian spirits of the tribe. In more advanced stages of social development the gods clearly emerge as the guardians of morality. Theft, adultery, falsehood, eating of forbidden foods, are all punished by the gods. The totem plants and animals, the sun, moon, and the stars, also defined human groups. Marriage and relationships were influenced by man's reference to objects of the physical environment. The sky came down to the earth and the forest, the mountain and the river overstepped their limits and expanded themselves, establishing their hegemony over every phase of human activity, and human life was acted out as a mysterious traffic with physical nature. Man is here neutral. It is the totem, Nature, Nature-Gods, Fate, Destiny, personified as divinities, which respectively prescribe his values and valuation. Some actions are regarded as displeasing to the gods, and forbidden; and law punishes not merely the individual, but also the whole community for upsetting the supernatural order and thereby incurring the divine wrath. Sin is that which the gods dislike, and man is virtuous that the gods may find no cause for dissatisfaction with him. Later the need of social integration made Society to be the irrefutable arbiter of human values. Man escaped from all the disharmonies of life to society, which brought about the inner adjustment. Religion now characteristically embraced all that is for the stability, maintenance, and survival of the social group. Adoption, initiation, marriage, death, the preservation of food resources, property, occupation, justice, fear of pestilence, famine, or disaster: all these came to be under the control and management of religion. Social, economic, and religious taboos and regulations were inextricably interwoven. Religion at this stage inevitably ensures social security, peace, and progress.

It explains social origins in terms of God's desire, and defines in gods the ideals of men. God creates the social classes, and social distinctions are accepted as representing God's will. Birth, marriage, death, are all religious ceremonies. The standard of craftsmanship is ensured by the craft-god. Oaths are taken in the name of God. The settlement of village disputes is presided over by the village God and is ratified by offerings at His shrine. A round of religious ceremonies and festivals keeps the peasant at work or maintains his spirits through periods of suspense and stress. The building of an embankment, the planting of trees, the digging of a well, the foundation of a house for sick animals, are prized because of the spiritual benefits they confer. Thus in many ways Gods represent social values. They hold together the people in a common effort against a common danger or in common rejoicings and festivals. They punish social crimes as sins, and reward social virtue with seats in heaven. The heaven itself is pictured as the abode of the immortal and the blessed among men, existing in a social stratification which is the exact counterpart of earthly social existence. Gods represent the apotheosis of human virtue, and they are void of ill-will, malice, or enmity. Unlike the Nature Gods they are no longer awe-inspiring or terrible. They are approachable and amenable to men's wishes in the same way as great men. Yet they are human-divine; they have a divinity which does not belong to men, which men seek and yet which ever eludes their grasp. The human and the divine attributes in most religions are a heterogeneous mixture. Indra gives rain and Zeus wields the thunderbolt, and the sexual morality of both is not above reproach. The former was once caught and punished severely as an ordinary mortal by an indignant saint. The moon god, Chandra, has an illicit love affair, and he suffers from consumption. Vishnu was the ancient personification of the sun, but the sun-God Krishna is an incarnation of his divine essence. He is the Divine Cowherd who plays on his flute, loves the shepherds, and their flocks, and protects them from storms and floods. In the same manner does Apollo, the character of the sun, sing songs and shepherd flocks. But sometimes gods manifest themselves as men to share man's suffering in grave social crises. The Gods represent not merely eternal human values, but

also new and changing values in obedience to man's fresh need of social harmony and adjustment. The conceptions of Avatar in Hinduism, of the Bodhisattva in Buddhism, and of the Messiah in Judaism and Christianity, illustrate religion in terms of social consciousness.

RELIGION IN SOCIETY.—Society is the precondition of the pursuit of important human values and satisfactions. Social disintegration and even mutilation, indeed, jeopardize most human values. It is for this reason that man often subordinates himself to society and utilizes religion to bring out results that subserve social ends. As social life has advanced and become more complex, the groups have demanded a more unwavering allegiance from individuals. Standardization is necessary for the sake of unity and efficiency of society. Religion then steps in to inculcate unfailing loyalty of the individual to the group. It is particularly in times of crisis which threatens the dissolution of the group that the socially conservative aspect of religion becomes more apparent. In the past religion explained social origins and sought to justify the existing social organization. Through the ages the reigning religion often proved an ally of the "powers that be" and became hostile to science and democracy, the forces of progress. Thus institutional religion, which through its ecclesiastical organization moulded a people's beliefs and standards in conformity to authoritative State traditions, is itself discredited when in a democratic upheaval the people identify the State with a particular class. The inadequacy of social religion inevitably arises from the fact that different individuals participate unequally in social values. Religion, therefore, fails to satisfy the norms of universality and stability. Sociality is a growing thing, and an ideal of sociality which belongs to the future involves a blind and even fatalistic subservience to laws of Nature—a subservience which is incompatible with genuine religious consciousness. For in the sphere of religion man determines for himself his ideal life. It is not for Nature or Society—even though personified as Gods—to dictate man's spiritual valuation. Man builds a paradise alone and by himself, whereof he is absolute monarch. It is not for Nature or Society to build this for him or to delay its establishment on the earth.

MAN HAS OWN RELIGIOUS ANXIETY.—A social religion

shows not merely a lack of sense of proportion but also a logical contradiction. If man can build his ideal life by his tools of science, directed by intelligence, without a belief in God, then there is no need of a religion when weaklings disappear from society. No doubt man's religious attitude will concern itself more in the future with the organisation of society, for, as Julian Huxley contends, it is social and economic maladjustments that are causing distress and bewilderment and are being felt as Destiny to be propitiated or otherwise manipulated. But man's religion cannot be circumscribed within the limits of the social community, nor the religious attitude completely identified with man's social affections in the naturalistic human level. Moral and social virtues can neither be aroused by logic and comprehension, nor controlled by sociology. The conception that man's relations to fellow-men constitute the sphere of certain ultimate values, can alone serve as the secure foundations of a universal humanism, and such a conception can emerge only from religious experience. Science has not always given a true and unfaltering guidance for the direction of human activities along socially desirable channels. Thus, instead of science being called on to advise what expressions of the religious impulse will be permissible, it is upon religion that society will have progressively to depend for pulling the chariot of man's destiny along the path of progress. The pull must be shared by the invisible hand in order that its direction may be unerringly right. For as long as men's present ignorance and absence of control in regard to their own minds persist no economic and social planning can be sure of its aims. Religion alone can not only set up the scale of values but also provide the emotional drive for getting them realized in practice. "The neutrality of science in regard to emotions and moral and æsthetic values," admits Julian Huxley, "means that while in its own sphere of knowledge it is supreme, in other spheres it is only a method and a tool." If religion be regarded as an extraneous support like a crutch, which man may throw away when he attains his proper strength, the very essence of religion as an inevitable expression of normal human nature, not of pathological conditions, is misunderstood. Religion at its highest finds neither in Nature nor in Society—not even when they are

personified as Gods—but in Self at once the ultimate arbiter and the very substance of values. In the mystical consciousness man does not project his values and ideals either to nature or to society, but realises them in his own consciousness. Here goodness becomes identified with salvation, and both Nature and Society reveal the All-Good. The subjective self thinks, feels, and wills. Religion defines the ultimate values of life in terms of these three functions as Truth, Beauty (or Love), and Goodness. Thus did the *Upanishads* of old name the ultimate ends of life so as to make them self-conscious. Religion is a consciousness that Truth, Beauty, and Goodness are, and are real. Religion is an endeavour to secure the conservation of Truth, Beauty, and Goodness through man's specific actions. Nature may be relentless and cruel, society may be unjust and unwholesome, the philosophy of cosmic evolution may not excite our admiration; but these have no bearing upon man's ideal world, which, in spite of these, in spite of himself, is true, good, and beautiful.

In the mystical consciousness Nature is but an insignificant speck in a limitless ocean of light, an insignificant fragment of a vast system which man imagines. Let the poet Tagore speak :—

"This is thy play—

Thou swingest us in the swing to the rhythm of a ceaseless melody,
For a moment thou liftest us to light,

The next moment thou hurst us back into the darkness.

When the swing goes up we laugh for joy,

But when it goes downward we cry out in fear.

Thou talkest thine own treasure

From thy right hand to thy left, and from left to right again.

Thou artest in solitude

Gathering the suns and moons with thy swing eternally.

Now thou uncoverst them and they are naked,

Again thou veilest them as with a garment.

Vainly we cry out loudly,

Thinking that the treasures of our heart are washed away.

But everything is whole and complete,

There is naught that suffers loss;

Only the swing itself perpetually comes and goes."¹

Here even in the poet we find a spiritual, not a romantic or æsthetic valuation.

Bertrand Russell contends that the philosophy of Nature

¹ *As a Karmic Chakravarti's translation.*

must not be unduly terrestrial; for it, the earth, is merely one of the smaller planets of one of the smaller stars of the Milky Way. It would be ridiculous to warp the philosophy of nature in order to bring out results that are pleasing to the tiny parasites of this insignificant planet. Vitalism as a philosophy, and evolutionism, show in this respect a lack of sense of proportion and logical relevance.¹

The mystic Dada, the wanderer of Ahmedabad, sees in Nature the essence of beauty, joy, and life, for it is his own world of values which re-centres Nature for him.

"Why not go to Him who has wrought that marvel," says Dada, "and ask: 'Canst thou ever imagine make clear this wondrous making of the one into the many?' When I look on creation as beauty of form, I see only Form and Beauty. When I look on it as life, everywhere I see life. When I look on it as Brahman then, indeed, is Dada at a loss for words. When I see it in relation, it is of a bewildering variety. When I see it in my own soul, all its variegation is merged in the beauty of the Supreme Soul. The eye of sense then becomes also the eye of Brahman, and in this exchange of mortal vision does Dada behold truth."

The same inner vision is characteristic of the religious Nature-mysticism of Richard Jefferies who writes:—

"The mystery and the grandeur are not in the rocks of the grass, nor in the depth of the sea. They are in my existence and in my soul. As time progressed—the seed of Nature unages became less. It is now less closely associated with the sun and sea, hills, woods, or hazy misty landscape. It is always within. I need no earth or sea or sun to think my thought."²

MYSTICISM AND NATURE.—It is true that the inadequacy of the philosophy of nature is corrected by mysticism, which reaches through Nature to its source, which is at once Life, Form, and Beauty. Thus in the mystical approach to Nature, the earth, sun, and moon, the Milky Way, stars, flowers, mountains, rain, sea, and animals, all become symbols for the communing mind. In one of the No-plays of Japan we read:—

"The Buddha bids the flowers of spring
Mount the two-top that men may meet their eyes
And walk on upward paths.
He bids the moon in the western waves be drowned
In token that he visits laggard men
And leads them out of the valleys of despair."

¹ Russell, *What I believe*, p. 22.

² *The Story of My Heart*.

A deep religious Nature-mysticism characterises the later developments of Buddhism in China and Japan. In Zen Buddhism the conception of the Many as the One was the fertile ground of an understanding of the unity of life in which the face of Nature became "The screen of the Inamurata". A sage finds in a stone lying near the temple gate all the Buddhas of the past, the present, and the future. The forest teachers imbued with a furthest sense point to the rising and the setting of the sun, to the deep sea, or to the falling flakes of snow in winter, and thereby illustrate the lessons of Zen. When sages are asked to explain their religious beliefs, they reply: "Our eyes have seen the ocean, our ears have heard the wind sighing, the rain descending, the sea-waves dashing, and the wild birds calling." There is, again, the well-known symbol of the morning glory as expressing at once the tragic brevity as well as the moral beauty of life, and this theme appears again and again in Japanese poetry and painting.¹

A typical Zen description of human life is that of Dogen, one of the most distinguished leaders of Zen Buddhism:—

"Calm and serene in the midnight
Lo! a drenched boat on the water,
Not tossed by the waves nor driven by the breeze,
Brood in the pale light of the moon!"²

Here Nature-mysticism and religious contemplation merge in each other, Nature being faced in abstraction bereft of dawning colours and vivid motions.

In Zen meditation the human soul, indeed, finds an affinity with and penetrates into the heart of Nature, not her active and agitated aspects but the purity and serenity pervading the universe. This mood is called "at-rhythm", denoting the sentiment and temper of transcendental calmness, and it finds its expression in riddle-like poems, terse in expression and full of suggestion, as well as in landscape paintings without colour or shading. Anemaki describes how this peculiar sense of aesthetic enjoyment is applied to the house, the garden, and all the surroundings of an abode, and alike to the manner of sitting, the way of sipping from tea-cups or of using fans, in short to nearly every detail of life in Japan.³

¹ For Buddhism and Nature see Mrs. Eliza Davis's *Buddhist Psychology*, and Comarow's *Buddhism and the Gospel of Buddhism*, pp. 158-178, 203-6.

² Quoted in Anemaki, *History of Japanese Religion*, p. 308.

³ Anemaki, *History of Japanese Religion*, p. 315; Taguchi, *A Letter from a Japanese Pilgrim in Europe*.

A bare philosophy of Nature cannot feed the mystic imagination. For the mystic Nature is not ultimate, he imports into it meanings and values of human life and destiny. Thus Beauty, Truth, or Knowledge is revealed even by the mearest flower that blows, the flight of a sky-lark or crane, the brief bloom of the morning glory, the glaze of the dewdrop on the blade of grass, or the majesty of the everlasting pine. It is the very essence of religion to create symbols, and it is the symbols that express man's conviction that Nature has significance not by herself, but as revealing his own scheme of values, and a reality akin to himself which invites his complete absorption.

MYSTICISM AND SOCIETY—FROM SELF TO THE LIFE OF MAN.—Similarly the organization of society is but a faint glimpse, a momentary phase, of an ideal system of relations which man can imagine. A social interpretation of religion thus shows a want of balance. Religion is concerned with the singular totalities, Truth, Love, and Goodness, which are all infinite. Man may love deeply, but a profounder love can be imagined. Man may have a profound knowledge, yet can feel that he is like a child collecting pebbles on the seashore of knowledge. Man may lead an exceedingly good life, yet may be dissatisfied that he cannot lead a better one. True religion is consequently a many-sided experience for the worshipper. It involves self-thought and a solution of the problem of the Whence, the What, and the Whither of Self. For the problem of valuation inevitably implies analysis of the self-reference of consciousness. In scientific thinking we find a more or less explicit self-consciousness of the thinker, and not infrequently the success of thinking depends on the clearness of the consciousness of one's personal equation. But "the religious question", as Tawney observes, "relates precisely to the self, constituted by the present consciousness itself, and self-felt, if you please, as either happy or miserable, as in harmony or discord with its world. Here it is not the personal equation that is important, but the self as a whole, including its relations to the physical and social not-self of which it is a part. As a whole, the self is beautiful or hideous, good or bad, happy or unhappy, and this is religious consciousness. In the religious consciousness one reacts to the self as an object." It is this which underlies

the ancient Eastern religious conviction that an individual's subjective self is in its essence the universal self whole and undivided, and that there is no strictly intellectual or scientific way of apprehending it. "From him came back baffled both word and man, but he who realises the joy of Brahman is free from fear," says the seer of the *Upanisads*.

He is the one God, who is hiding Himself in all creatures, who pervades everything and knows the hearts of all creatures, He alone is the source of the varied activities of all creatures, and in Him dwell all creatures. He is the essence of knowledge. He is described also as Vishvakarma, one Whose activity comprehends the world, Who is Love, the essence of Joy and fearlessness, as also the Eternal Good. It thus follows that the method of religious living is the deliberate cultivation of Truth, Love, and Goodness all together. Religion emphasises love and devotion to the whole of humanity and stands above and beyond petty social and ethical considerations, which bind the individual to the clan, the tribe, the class, or the group. Man links himself with the rest of the universe as a solution of the problem that arises out of self-introspection, not merely out of the needs of organic and social solidarity in the upward evolution of group life. He consciously seeks a supernatural and super-rational order in which every sentient creature would be to every other the object of perfect love, compounded of joy and understanding indissolubly intermingled. The Buddha described such a perfect world when he spoke of *Brahma-Vibara*, i.e. living in Brahma, as follows:—

"Do not deceive each other, do not despise any body anywhere, never be angry with any one to suffer through your body, words, or thoughts.

"Like a mother maintaining her only son with her own life, keep thy unmeasurable loving thought for all creatures.

"Above thee, below thee, on all sides of thee, keep on all the world thy sympathy and unmeasurable loving thought, which is without obstruction, without any wish to acquire, without enmity.

"To be dwelling in such contemplation while standing, walking, sitting, or lying down, until sleep overcomes thee, is called living in Brahma."

BUDDHISM, SCIENTIFIC YET SYMPATHETIC.—It is recognized on all hands that Buddhism, though it is not a religion of love, but of knowledge, is the most sympathetic of all religions. Christianity emphatically lays down "Love thy neighbour as thyself", "Love your enemies", but it does

not explain adequately why one should do so. It relies upon the arousal of supreme pity and good will which God's redeeming love and sacrifice engender in every heart. Both Buddhism and the Vedānta interpret morality as knowledge, and establish a practical discipline to ensure that control of the instincts of self-assertion, aggression, etc., which the Christian injunctions, for instance, involve. Paul Dahlke remarks: "Buddhism stands along with the Vedānta in opposition to Christianity with its despotic, because incomprehensible, moral requirements. Both are apotheoses of egoism, yet each is so in an entirely different manner and fashion." In Buddhism, one's own seeming self is the source of mutual actions and interactions which link together the ever-lengthening chain of evil deeds. Morality proceeds from the understanding of self as an appearance; it is an episode in the deliverance of the suffering being from the evil and misery of the world. The following *gāthā* sums up the Buddhist doctrine in a nutshell.—

"Commit no wrong, but good deeds do
And let thy heart be pure;
All Buddhas teach this truth
Which will for ever endure."

SIX CARDINAL VIRTUES OF BUDDHISM.—The six *pāramitās*, or virtues of perfection, which are the cardinal principles in the career of the Bodhisattva, are:—

1. Charity or Compassion, which is "the supreme means of conciliating creatures, expressing itself in liberality, almsgiving, affability, and obligingness and sharing the joy and sorrow of others."

2. Morality, or adherence to the moral precepts inculcated by the Buddha.

3. Patience, endurance of suffering, of injuries, of insight into the law.

4. Energy, or effort for good.

5. Contemplation, or meditation of the equality of self and neighbour and the substitution of neighbour for self.

6. Wisdom, or application of the mind to the knowledge of the truth.

MAHAYĀNA BUDDHISM AND UNIVERSAL LOVE.—The ideal of Mahayāna Buddhism is universal love. *Nirvāṇa* in the sense of extinction is never regarded as man's final goal.

Even the attempt to attain individual salvation, irrespective of the salvation of all creatures, is deprecated. Aryadeva observes —

"Those who are afraid of annas and seek their own advantage and happiness in salvation are inferior to those superior to Buddhahood who rejoice at their rebirth, for it gives them an opportunity to do good to others. Those who feel only for themselves may enter nirvana, but the equivalent to Buddhahood who feels for the sufferings of his fellow-creatures as though they were his own, how can he bear the thought of leaving his fellow-creatures behind, while he himself is seeking for salvation and rejoicing in the realm of nirvana? Nirvana in truth consists in rejoicing in others being made happy, and someone cannot not feeling happy. Whoever feels a universal love for his fellow-creatures will rejoice in conferring bliss on them and by so doing attain Nirvana" ¹

The Bodhisattva, indeed, learns the hard lesson of identifying himself wholly and entirely with others, of regarding all creatures as if they are Buddhas. There is complete "equality between others and oneself" (*paramamata*), and the Bodhisattva finally reduces it to "transformation of the neighbour into oneself" (*paramaparivartana*). Santideva thus admirably expresses the vow of the Bodhisattva —

"I must destroy the sorrow of the stranger because it pains like one's own grief, I must therefore do good to others because they are beings like myself. Just as a man torn his hands and feet because they are his members, so also all living beings have the right of affection, inasmuch as they are all members of the same world of animate creation. It is only mere usage which makes us look upon this our body, which, in fact, does not exist, as our ego. Exactly similarly by habit we can bring ourselves to see our ego in others. Our only enemy is our selfish ego. Remember, O my thought, the Footsith hope that I have still a special interest in you. I have given you to my neighbour, thinking nothing of your sufferings. For, if I were so foolish as not to give you over to the creatures, there is no doubt that you would deliver me to the demons, the guardians of hell. How often, indeed, have you not handed me over to those wicked, and for what long tortures! I remember your long enmity, and I crush you, O self, the slave of your own interests. If I really love myself I must not love myself. If I wish to preserve myself, I must not preserve myself" ²

¹ Yamakani Sogen, *System of Buddhist Thought*, pp. 33-4, Grouzet. In *The Footsteps of the Buddha*, pp. 314-317, also the present writer. "The Law of Compassion in Mysticism" in *The Asahi Press*, May, 1932.

² See Narayan, *Lotus History of Buddhist Buddhism*, p. 108; also Pannan, article no "Bodhisattva", *Encyclopedia of Religions and Ethics*.

VEDANTA AND TRANSCENDENTALISM.—In the Vedanta morality similarly follows from knowledge, from the realization that "That thou art". It is the most complete or transcendental affirmation of the self, the effacement of distinctions between self and all sentient creatures and all things which are here the goal of life, and morality becomes an episode in the establishment of the Unity. In the identity-consciousness, morality, and existence are thus identified. The identity expressed emotionally becomes an all-embracing love, while in the sphere of action it becomes surrender of the will and service. In Hindu Ethics the unconscious as well as the conscious desires are equally important as leading to good or evil deeds, and knowledge eradicates the roots of evil desires, conscious or unconscious. The following classification of the good desires, that of Vidyaranya-swami, is typical of Hindu culture :—

" Sympathy with the happiness of others.
Compassion towards the suffering
Rejoicing at the good of all sentient creatures.
Indifference or aversion towards the unrighteous.
Tranquility of mind.
Repression of the external senses.
Endurance.
Renunciation "

Hindu ethics has its roots in philosophy and it is essentially disciplinary and practical in having before itself the goal of leading the self beyond the empirical to the transcendental. In the transcendental life the individual realizes the oneness of his Being, and its immanence throughout. Thus there emerges one Life, one Form, one Joy, through nature and humanity. This identity-consciousness, however, makes some sensitive individuals indifferent to the concerns of the work-a-day world, oblivious of the hopes and fears of men. They become steeped in the tranquillity and peace of their own meditative life, and boquerath to the world only that knowledge which enables others to stand afloat in the same manner. But there are others who live for fellow-men because they are a part and parcel of the cosmic existence. And then we have in morality a pattern of the super-rational cosmic order. In the purely theistic systems, mere dissolution of *avidya* or ignorance as regards identity is neither morality nor the path to morality by itself.

In the Vaidhyanic tradition knowledge and good deeds as well (*karma*) are not in themselves adequate. Apart from meditation, certain auxiliary virtues are emphasized, such as veracity, straightforwardness, charity, kindness, harmlessness, indifference, freedom from elation at prosperity, and from depression in adversity. These are essential aids to the cultivation of Love and Devotion, and contribute to transform love into a living experience. Through Love, in which knowledge and morality culminate, the individual attains true freedom, which is itself nothing but a living faith and love, an attainment in devotion and a restoration through surrender.¹

MAHVEA AND RAMANUJA SYSTEMS AND SERVICE OF MAN.—The theistic Madhve system is that which believes in difference between man and God, and between man and man, as eternal and ultimate, yet promulgates the service of man as the true worship of the Lord. *bhajaman*. In speech one aims at truth, beneficence, and loving kindness. By the body one serves through giving, redeeming, and protecting. By the mind one serves through mercy, goodwill, and faith or reverence. These are the social forms of the Lord's service, which one must dedicate, each and all, to Narayana, the Lord of the Human. Similarly the Ramanuja faith finds the inspiration to service to fellow-men in the Lord's own never-ceasing service to His creatures. These scriptures teach that even the Lord's knowledge exists for the illumination of the ignorant creature, and His guidance unto all forms of good; and that the Lord's *Sakti*, Power, consists in imparting strength to the weak, power to the powerless, in their endeavour after the good. The Lord, so the scripture has it, beholds creatures crossing the sea of *samsara* in the frail boat of the flesh, and says to Himself: "I will be their boat, and I, even I, will be tossed about and buffeted by the waves of that sea!" Again, as the Cow-Mother protects the newborn calf from the grown-up bulls, by shaking her horns at them, so the divine Mother, out of love of offspring, protects helpless children, the weak, the ignorant, and the fallen.²

CULTS OF DIVINE LOVE.—In Vaidhyanism, the Mother and

¹ Vide S. K. Maim, *Illness of the Hindus*, p. 14.

² Brajvanmuth Sastri's Address before the Madras Panchajanya Conference, Mysore.

Siva culta, as in Christianity, there is emphasized the consecration of life and experience which participates in Divine Love, and we have in all these theistic systems a quietistic ideal and beatific vision, as well as the divine grace and the divine forgiveness, which bind man the sinner and God the Perfect with true evangelical daring in a fellowship of the mutual dependence of love and help. St. Augustine said: "Had I not been a sinner, how could there have been a Saviour?" Perfection and imperfection are both necessary in the communion of love. In God's love no virtue is uplifting, no vice is degrading. The generic impulses and desires bind man outwardly in social life and relationships, but it is these which at the same time quicken contemplation. Hence the passionate soul alone can be a true mystic, and for him love, truth, and beauty reveal themselves in man's daily relationships and concrete experiences with fellow-men. For these are the external and ultimate values which to the mystic are rooted in the nature of God, and actualised in his experience of life. The idea of the Good is an abstraction, but must be realized in an associated and reciprocal life. The teaching that God is love spurs man to a mutual sacrifice and perfected intercourse comprehending the entire living world. Religion in this manner builds up an attitude which efforts the greatest amount of thought and sacrifice of man for fellow-man. The mystic's complete living here becomes an episode in the establishment of permanent conditions of union with the Divine in every man, nay, in every sentient being. All human and social experiences thus are seized and transformed into seeds of the eternal and the beautiful. Religion began as a deflation of the environment's mastery over man, whose sense of personal worth was utterly vanquished. It ends by setting up the environment as the substance of man's own aspirations and excellences, which similarly emphasizes man's impotence. But now such impotence is his highest worth, because the environment is the reflection of his own consciousness. In the Mahayana Buddhism *meta*, through self-knowledge and discipline of the mind, cultivates benevolence, which is the *summa bonum*, with a sweep that is universal. Here we have no conviction of human sin, as in Christianity or Vaishnavism, but a profound mystery, based on knowledge of self and the

human environment, and a steady outpouring of the heart to all creatures in order that the supreme goal ultimately may be reached. It is from the emotional qualities of religious belief that charity and love gain sufficient strength to counteract the selfishness and propensities of man. Not merely rational argument and permission are invoked, but, moreover, the feeling of love itself is aroused in its fullness with a view to expand the closed circle of self till it encompasses all sentient life. The difference between the Vedānta and Mahāyāna Buddhism indicates that charity needs a religious motive if it is to reach its widest range. Therefore in the latter even meditation is subordinated to the active virtues of compassion, humility, and patience. Śaṅkadeva quotes the *Sūyambhāṣya* on the subject of benevolence and mercy, and commends that the verses should be observed with respect and rehearsed even with the voice. The human mind rarely attains so great a breadth of intense, inexhaustible sympathy and, indeed, the verses deserve to be written in letters of gold :—

"By the dream of the *Śūyambhāṣya* sutra let pains be assigned to the three thousand worlds, pains of ruin, pains of Yama's world, and the pains of poverty here in the human world, and by this as it sounds the dream let vice in the world be ended, and let all beings be unburied by fear, even as the great eagles are without fear, their fears allayed : even as those are endowed with all holy virtues, essence of enlightenment as regards existence, so may people be seas of virtue cadenced with all the constraints of tranquillity and wisdom. . . . fo all the regions of all things that have breath let all pain be done away in the world. Let all creatures that are maimed in their organs or docked of a limb be whole as they should be. Let those who are diseased, weak, without limbs, lying helpless in all places, all be set free from their diseases quickly and be made whole in the organs of strength. They who are frightened by kings, robbers, and thieves, condemned to death, threatened with misery by hundreds of different fears, let all those in misery and pain be set free from the hundreds of fears great and awful. Let the condemned have life, let those in misery all be made secure. Let the hungry, perished, or thirsty receive food and drink in plenty. Let the blind see beautiful shapes, let the deaf hear pleasant sounds, let the naked receive fine caiment, the poor a treasure. Let all beings be happy with plenty of wealth and robes and goodly jewels. May no one have pain or misery ; may all beings be full of happiness, beautiful, pleasant, delightful ; may all happiness be accumulated for them always." 1

UNITY THE GOAL OF MYSTICISM.—It is a remarkable feature of Mahāyāna Buddhism to maintain the view that

¹ See Yamakura Sagen, *Systems of Buddhist Thought*, p. 380.

Nirvana and the world-order are one. Nirvana is not to be sought outside this world, which, though transient, is in reality nothing more than Nirvana itself. Because it is contrary to reason to imagine that there is Nirvana and that there is samsara, and that the one lies outside the pale of the other, and, therefore, that we can attain Nirvana only after we have annihilated or escaped from the world of birth and death. If we are not hampered by our confused subjectivity this our worldly life is an activity of Nirvana itself. Vasubandhu expressed this view as follows :—

"All are transformed into the constancies of enlightenment,
The vicissitudes of samsara transformed with the multitude of
arhats,
All these came from the exercises of the great religious discipline
Beyond our understanding, indeed, is the mystery of all Buddhas " 1

The Buddha once spoke to Zengen thus —

"O Zengen, the common man knows not that his thoughts are like dreams, like shadows, like visions and spectres. That is why he clings to what are mere shadows and does deeds of good and evil, happiness and misfortune on his body, words and will. In reality there are no such distinctions, even though it may seem there are " 2

We thus see that the knowledge and insight which are the outflows of the highest mystical contemplation in different religions brook no duality in the system of experience, but contribute to a profound change in man's behaviour, as well as in his psychical state, and to a novel interpretation of his environment, which becomes the substance of his own value forms. Here sin becomes identified with intelligence. "What is sin or delusion, that is intelligence," says the Mahayana Sutra. Value here becomes identified with existence. Says Asanga : "As there is no phenomenon separated from reality, so when describing ignorance, wise people are of opinion that it is intelligence itself." A famous Zen hymn similarly says : "(A man who knows the truth) does not reject error. The true nature of the unintelligible cannot be other than the Buddha nature." On this Oshamu comments : "Truth does not need to be sought first, for it is present everywhere, even in error. Hence he who rejects error rejects truth." 3 It is thus that the poles meet in mystical intuition. What has

1 *The Discourse on Buddhist Ethics*.

2 Quoted in *Beckwith, Studies in Japanese Buddhism*, p. 104.

3 Quoted in *Pratt, The Pilgrimage of Buddhism*, p. 262.

been put eternally apart is eternally united. The immaterial, impalpable, transcendent heaven is made one and continuous with the gross and unhappy natural world. One is the other, the other the one. God is the world and transcends it; is the evil and the good which conquers and consumes that evil.¹ God becomes Man; the travails of men are the throes of the birth of gods. Primitive religion defined God in terms of fear, wonder, and awe created by an alien and hostile environment. Mystical intuitionism defines God in terms of an all-inclusive love and apprehension, when the environment becomes man's own and embodies all his values and aspirations. Where, again, religion brooks no God, and mysticism is without communion, man's infinite and finite are unified so completely as to harmonize all opposites and contradictions in his environment, reflecting his own manifold eternal existence.

¹ A. M. Niles in *Creative Intelligence*, p. 462.

CHAPTER XVIII

UNITY OF MYSTICAL EXPERIENCE

FROM SOCIAL TO PERSONAL RELIGION.—The significance of religion consists in the fact that it creates an environment of value-forms over and above man's physical and social environment, so that the conflicts in the latter may be abolished or harmonized. It is philosophy which first postulates the values, but it is religion which brings these home to the individual in the form of specific emotional reactions. In the history of religions we find that it is the variety in man's tendencies and dispositions, as well as in his philosophy, which accounts for the variety of the objects of worship and religious dogmas. Religious objects and doctrines, like all human contrivances and works, show, indeed, a variegated pattern. Each religion is bound up with the entire social fabric, ethics, and philosophy of a people. It is out of the specific action-attitudes, emotions, and ideas of a people that all art and religion, myth and dream, are fashioned. As civilization progressed man acquired greater control over Nature, and also greater emancipation from the social pressure. Thus his emotional reactions gradually became more and more specific, his ideas and symbols came to be fashioned more and more out of the raw material of individual desires and attitudes. This implies a change from social to individual religion. We have already seen that with the increase of mystical inwardness the mind gradually separates itself from the social or traditional setting of the religious emotion which has been the mystic's starting-point. Finally, with the complete dissociation of the mind from the symbol or image, the mystic becomes a free man and his ideas and feelings cease to belong to a particular religion, but belong to all. Personal religion, which is *par excellence* man's self-expression, has its appeal to man everywhere. It is a Universal Religion.

VALUE OF EAST RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE.—Man's attitude to God has a variety and uniqueness that belong to the

individual. Religions which jealously maintain their creeds as inviolable properties, and do not tolerate individual experimentation, are theologies and do not satisfy the needs of vital adaptation. On the other hand, the religious tradition in which an individual is born ought never to be disregarded, because nothing can offer a safer guidance in conflict and despair than the accumulated religious experience of the past. As in every field of valuation, individual experience and group tradition are equally important as formative factors in religion. Rigid creeds which exclude all individual initiative and spontaneity may become correct and proper, but nothing spreads cynicism and alienation more than these. On the other hand, the freedom of the mystical consciousness is only possible as a result of the aid to the discipline and expression of thought, will, and emotions that past religious experience furnishes. Finally, there is no doubt that man at no distant day will be able to avail himself of the values and experiences of the great historic religions in his individual life, and adopting, for instance, the discipline of the Hindu or Buddhist Yoga, the Christian saint, and the Musliman Sufi, fuse all religious values in some measure. We shall then have, not one concrete Universal Religion, but forms of mysticism which will be more universal in their appeal and richer in their contents than ever before, owing to the reciprocal influences and assimilation of the different religions.

PLEA FOR SCIENTIFIC STUDY OF RELIGION.—It is for this reason that the religious creeds, doctrines, and ceremonies of all nations deserve close scientific study in the evolution of man's religious values and experience. It is only when we see the religious experiences of particular peoples in their proper ethical and philosophical setting that we can expect a synthesis and resultant sympathy between the different historical religions.

The time is not yet come when we can rightly discriminate between theology and religion in each culture and estimate the contribution of each religion to the religious consciousness of humanity. Each religion no doubt presents an ideal *socius* or self which satisfies perfectly all values, and it is only by a co-ordination of the satisfactions and excellences that the great religions of the world stand for that we can understand—Universal Humanity. The comparative study of

philosophy has begun, and so has the appreciation of æsthetic attitudes. Therefore an appreciation of the universal value-forms which are embodied in the great religions of the world is timely. For if there is anything which can bring races and peoples together it is the passionate affirmation of unity before the All-Good, the ardent, yet not wholly successful desire of man everywhere to identify himself with the supreme standard of goodness that his religion sets up for him.

SIFTING THE VALUES OF RELIGION.—It is not an easy task to separate the kernel of value forms from the chaff of inherited theology. Modern science has ruthlessly discussed the cosmogonies of many religions, and given a new view of the origins of man, the earth, sun, and moon, while both heaven and hell have been relegated to mythology. Modern history has questioned the validity of revelations of many gods and prophets, found some scriptures spurious, and has exposed the greed and cunning of priesthoods. Modern psychology has built up a new view of human nature, which has run counter to ancient doctrines of original sin and individual salvation. It has exposed also the grossness of many erotic cults and rituals, and the prudishness of those which fail to recognize that love of God and the man-to-woman relation have the same mechanism. Through the records of saints and sinners, it has distinguished between the erratic and hysterical outbursts of abnormal individuals and the inspirational experiences of true mystics.

MODERN DRIFT FROM RELIGION.—In the meanwhile, the machine and standardization have become world-wide forces which have changed man's relation to his fellow-man and his attitude towards the enveloping universe. Man's work, aspirations, and values are to-day moulded after one pattern. Man to-day sees his fellow-man more as a means than as an end, and this strikes at the root of all higher values, including religion. His tools and machinery similarly elicit specialized types of interest which cannot be assimilated into the religious attitude. The rise of the denatured city and of tenements and lodgings where men think, feel, and act in crowds, as well as the abandonment of the plain, simple, secluded life, responsive to Nature and to human fellowship, have everywhere been fatal to the religious life. An adequate religious system must grapple not merely with the unplea-

tions of modern science, but also with the social and ethical results of machine-driven industrialism.

RELIGION KEEPS STEP WITH MAN.—If religion has survived so many changes in the phase of culture, in social organization, and in man's attitude to the universe, there is no reason why religion should not be able to assimilate the laws of energy in physics and the phenomena of standardisation in sociology. Religion dispensed with magic, ghosts, and angels as man acquired a greater control of Nature. It superseded animal guardian spirits by tribal gods and national deities, as society expanded. It changed the direct worship of the sun and moon into a mediate worship of God as Light when man advanced in astronomy. Throughout its past history religion interpreted the cruder theologies and cult-forms of the past symbolically or mystically in obedience to new intellectual needs and attitudes. Some such attempts at substitution or compromise are to-day required in all world-religions, and, indeed, all have set themselves now to the task of re-orienting their thinking.

VALUE OF ELASTICITY IN RELIGION.—That religion will succeed most in this task which offers the greatest scope to the individual for religious thinking and experimentation. On the other hand, a religion which formulates a rigid creed to the individual that he must accept to obtain salvation, or which is dominated by an authoritative priesthood, has the least opportunity to evolve new attitudes and interpretations out of the old. Professor Haydon contrasts the opportunities of Christianity and Hinduism in this connection:—

"While all religions are facing the necessity of modernising their thinking, the problem is not the same for all. Naturally the task is most difficult where, as in Christianity, creeds have been formally accepted and are coloured by recognised authority. Even though the authority may be challenged, the fundamentals, charged with emotional value, tend to give form to the thinking of the moderns. In contrast, the almost universal tolerance of Hinduism, in the realm of thought, offers a free field for anyone who feels the necessity of formulating a more adequate religious system. The fundamentals lie elsewhere."

TOLERANCE IN EASTERN RELIGIONS.—The distinction that the "fundamentals" are not in the realm of religious ideology is rooted in the nature of culture itself. Amongst a people, heterogeneous in ethnic composition and presenting striking contrasts both in the levels of civilisation and in beliefs and

theologies, religion cannot but be eclectic, syncretic, and synthetic. The assimilation of cultures and customs is here the sociological background on which the religious ideology is built up. Here we have, therefore, the least emphasis of an imperative creed, and the greatest scope for individual experimentation. In Hinduism we find a toleration of totemic beliefs, animistic observances, and strange superstitions and cult-forms which belong to primitive religion side by side with the ancient monotheism and transcendentalism. "The scriptures are different; their interpretation is different; there is no man without a belief of his own. The truths of religion are hidden. Let us follow the path trodden by great men." This is the way of Hinduism. Similarly in China Confucianism is more a system of social ethics than of religious dogma; hence the Chinese *literati* have ample scope for independent religious thinking. Buddhism, again, in its supreme confidence of the inclusiveness of truth and of its own truth has assimilated to itself various foreign cults and observances, and even apparently incongruent beliefs in Burma, Siam, Korea, China, and, indeed, wherever it has travelled, seeking recourse like Hinduism in the doctrine of symbolic re-interpretation. There is a well-known parable in the *Lotos of the Good Law* where the Buddha shows not only that in the Eternal Heavens there are many mansions but that there are many "vehicles" by which one may approach them. In the case of Mahayana Buddhism, such natural tolerance has been reinforced by a theory of different grades or degrees of truth and the possession of a world-view wide enough to make room for most scientific hypotheses and most non-Buddhist philosophies as approximate pictures of certain aspects of Reality.¹

PERIL OF STANDARDIZATION.—The world is suffering to-day from the bleak institutional standardization, whether of industry or of the state, which has come in the wake of science. This has proved corrosive of the ancient values in vital modes of association. Both the Great Society and "Big Business" have, indeed, been breaking through the social control exercised by myriads of small groups and associations. Guilds, castes, village communities, agricultural and mercantile associations are all endangered, and the decline of group

¹ Frost, *The Fulcrum of Buddhism*, p. 714.

loyalties and of traditional controls of religion has gone together. It is now realized that the traditions of voluntary social co-operation cannot be allowed to lapse without risking grave moral loss. Thus in advanced social and industrial programmes the re-orientation of the local, occupational, or functional groups comes to the forefront in order that the East may not repeat the evils of standardization. In India, China, and Japan the numerous territorial and functional groups have been strengthened by the vitality and exuberance of cults and thought-forms. Religious and social pluralism have aided each other. The budding up of a social democracy by a rehabilitation of local and functional groups, and of a new industry on the foundations of guilds and co-operatives, has caught the imaginations of many leaders. It is in this social crisis that the religious pluralism which has its roots in the variegated institutional life of Eastern peoples assumes a world significance.

RELIGIOUS PROBLEM OF THE MODERN WORLD.—For the modern problem to-day is the challenge to man's creativeness by a world-imprisoning standardization with its shibboleth of mechanical as opposed to vital and purposive efficiency. The problems arising from the disintegration of free elastic groups and the lapse of individual initiative and spontaneity in every field of social life can only be met by a modern religious world-view. Indeed, such a view is forced upon all religions in order that the life of the spirit may be saved. But this comes more easily from cultures which have never admitted the supremacy of a rigid imperative creed or an ecclesiastical system, but have afforded the greatest possible scope to individual desires and aspirations in religious life.

TABLE OF RELIGIOUS THINNESSES.—It is possible that in working out an adjustment to practical ideals in the mechanical standardized life of to-day the great world religions will come to a rapprochement unthought of before. At least some of their doctrines, through a wide latitude of interpretation, will converge to meet common insistent problems in daily life and work. We might give an instance from the Hindu, Buddhist, and Christian doctrines of Immanence and Incarnation. The parallels will be evident if we consider briefly the Trine Mayas in the different religions together.

COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE TRINITIES.—In all living religions we have the repetition of the conviction that there is but one God, and that man, though derived from God, is yet co-eternal and participator in the divine nature. "Though He humbled Himself He never for a moment ceased to be God." Christianity ascribed to humanity and the world process a sanctity through the fact of the divine incarnation. In Christianity the First Being is God, unuttered and unbegotten. He out of Love sends Word and Spirit. The Word becomes flesh. Thus second in the order of thought is God the Son, Who is tabernacled amongst men, and shares the supreme suffering with them. But man's separation and suffering are not eternal, for it is the Spirit which brings about man's participation in God's nature. The Spirit is the third in the order of thought. God coming back to Himself. The imperfect man through the Spirit attains immortality and God's glory. In Hinduism the mortal and the perishable are similarly extolled as participating in God's essence. The Gita says:—

"These two Beings there are in the world, the perishable and the imperishable. The perishable is all living things. The one set on high is called the imperishable. But the highest Being is another called the Supreme Self, the changeless Lord, who having pervaded the three worlds sustains them. Since I am beyond the perishable and higher than the perishable, therefore am I celebrated in the world and in the scriptures as the Best of Beings."

In Mahayana Buddhism the same thought is expressed in the following sutra¹—

"In all beings there abideth the Dharma-kaya;
With all virtues dissolved in it, it liveth in eternal calmness.
It knoweth not birth, nor death, coming, nor going;
Yet present everywhere in worlds of beings;
This is what is perceived by all Tathagatas.
All virtues material and immaterial
Dependent on the Dharma-kaya are eternally pure as it."

The Dharma-kaya, or the Buddha-kaya, a term which is also often used, is "the reason, life, and norm of all particular existences". It is the abstract body of absolute Reason in Buddhist philosophy, the development of whose most concrete conception culminates in the Buddhas of meditation such as Vairocana (the Illuminator), Akshobhya (the Immovable), Ratnasambhava (the source of precious things),

¹ Quoted in Yamakuni Nagai's *Synopsis of Buddhist Thought*, p. 608.

Amitabha (the Buddha of infinite light), and Amoghasiddha (the Buddha of infallible power). The Sambhogakaya represents the body of supreme happiness of the Bodhisattva in the state of reflected Bodhi. The Nirmanakaya, or the body of transformation, represents the *samantabuddha*, who is mortal and ascetic and has passed through innumerable transformations on earth. According to Suzuki:—

"If we draw a parallel between the Buddhist and the Christian Trinity, the body of transformation (Nirmanakaya) may be considered to correspond to Christ in the flesh, the Body of Bliss (Sambhogakaya) rather to Christ in glory or to the Holy Ghost, and Dharmakaya to the Godhead."

In some sects of Northern Buddhism the Traya is represented by the trinity, Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. Buddha symbolizes the generative power, Dharma (or Prajna) the productive power, and their union produces Sangha (Dhyani-Bodhisattva), the active author of creation. The Trinity in Nepal and Tibet is Sakya-muni, Dipankara Buddha, Maitreya. In Ceylon: Avalokitesvara, Dipankara Buddha, Vajrapani. In Java: Manjusa, Dipankara Buddha, Vajrapani.¹ The call of Christianity to every individual is to realize the redeeming love and sacrifice of Christ, who in His earthly life conquered death and sin. The call of Brahmanism similarly has been to realize by knowledge of the supreme Brahman one's own identity with the universe, which alone can assure absolute tranquility of mind and the conquest of death. The call of the Indian theistic cults, again, is to understand the immanence of God in nature and in man and to realize in one's own life the play of God's love. In Islam the call is upon the faithful to submit joyously to God's will, to be patient in tribulations, grateful in felicity, and pleased with what is ordained. In Mahayana Buddhism the call is upon every individual to regard himself as a Bodhisattva, and, indeed, a Buddha, and by knowledge and perfection in love to make manifest the glory of the Bodhi heart. Thus the Buddhas yet to be will outnumber the grains of sand on the banks of the Ganges. Each person is a future Buddha. "When we all shall enter into Buddhahood we shall have but one being, one infinite intelligence, one united function, and we shall render service to multitudes of creatures for

¹ *Guth's The Gods of Northern Buddhism*, pp. 20-22.

ever."¹ In Islam the religious conviction that "There is no God but Allah" has in the mind of the true devotee given the vision of an all-comprehensive, all-absorbing One, even the duality of his own self disappearing. This is described by the Sufis as *fana fit-tawhid*, the effacement of one's individuality in contemplating the unity of God. Here the doctrine of immanence of God fights doubt and polytheism. The Great Persian mystic, Abu Sa'ad Ibn Ali'l-Kharr, says :—

"To say 'There is no God but Allah' is not enough. Most of those who make the verbal profession of faith are polytheist at heart, and polytheism is the one unpardonable sin. To stand firm means that when thou hast said 'one', thou must never again say 'Two'. Standing firm is that when thou hast said 'God' thou shouldst be ware speak or think of created things, so that it is just as though they were not."

It must be admitted that the uncompromising doctrine of unity in Islam, while it has been the basis of the highest types of mystical experience, meets the needs of common man less adequately than the beliefs in the Trinity or in Personal Divinity in other religions. Indeed, even in Islam there has appeared the twofold conception of God as absolute and as subject to limitations, so that He might be accessible to everybody. Ibn' al-'Arabi, the most celebrated among the Muhammadan mystics, observes :—

"God says : 'I am in My servant's opinion of me' i.e. 'I do not manifest Myself to him save in the form of his belief.' God is absolute or restricted, as He pleases ; and the God of religious belief is subject to limitations, for He is the God who is contained in the heart of His servant. But the absolute God is not contained by anything, for He is the being of all things and the being of Himself, and a thing is not said either to contain itself or not to contain itself."²

Al-Jili has, indeed, developed a distinct doctrine of the Trinity. According to him there are three movements of the Absolute Being : (1) Oneness, (2) He-ness, and (3) I-ness. In the first stage there is an absence of all attributes and relations. In the second stage, Pure Being is yet free from all manifestation ; while the third stage, I-ness, is nothing but an external manifestation of the He-ness, the self-disruption of the Essence into God and Man. Thus Al-Jili says : "If

¹ *Metaphysics Substantivum*.

² *Nyctagoga, Treatise of Eastern Poetry and Prose*, p. 100.

you say that God is one, you are right, but if you say that He is two, this is also true. If you say so, but He is three, you are right, for this is the real nature of man." ¹ The problem of the Trinity in Unity has remained a profound mystery in some religions and in others has been investigated by philosophy and epistemology along with experience and its revelations. In the Christian mysticised consciousness the first two Realities are stages or phases of the soul's progress. The second person in the Trinity sanctifies the elect. It is inappropriate to call God a Second Person because there is only One Person; but the latter is a distinct phase inasmuch as He is comprehensible, unlike the Former who is the Transcendent, and whom "No one knows". It is He that the elect praise in hymns. It is for Him that temples are built where He shines in His glory. It is His kingdom that is manifest; and, lastly, it is only by His appearance in the flesh that man is glorified.

MUTUALITY OF GOD AND MAN.—God as Love, Knowledge, and Beauty is His own manifest essence, spirit, or body. The Absolute is inaccessible to human thought and speech. But God with his attributes may be perceived as a Presence. He can be loved with all one's heart, and with all one's soul, and with all one's mind, and with all one's strength. God thus binds man in intimate relationship of love or devotion, plays with His variegated moods and aspirations, and offers His choicest gift of the Divine Fellowship. Says a recent writer:—

"By testimony of the most profound mystics, love is the crown of the mystical life, the bond of perfectness of the unitive life; and love requires a duality of selves in order to be love. It is duality in unity. Personality comes to its highest realization in the supreme mutuality of giving and receiving. It is a mistake to call this absorption, if by absorption is meant loss of either person—human or divine—to the relationship. It is not absorption but union."

In all forms of personal mysticism such as those of Jesus, John, or Paul, or those of the great Bhakti schools in India, we find the mutuality or communion between man and God underlie the higher powers and possibilities of the true self. But the human mind is not all of one pattern. Man often devotes himself, not to contemplation of the virtues of God, but to quiet introspection of his own consciousness. There

¹ See *Ishat, Development of Mysticism in Persia*, pp. 170-2.

are some temperaments for whom religious communion with a personal deity as in Christianity is less stimulating and helpful. These wish to know God less through their impulses and desires and more in the dry light of Reason as the Absolute, Whole, Unconditioned. In the course and all-embracing sweep of thought, they identify him with the ultimate reason of life; and their minds are calmly concentrated on and identify themselves with that and are only conscious with this unification. Such is the mode of a contrasted type of mysticism wrongly described as impersonal, and often characterized as losing itself in the sands of arid intellectualism or the marsh of sensuous pantheism.

If the senses and the heart have their licence, understanding also has its freedom, and, in the meditation of the unconditioned, pure Being, understanding becomes free to seek and perhaps realize its supreme good. The mysticism of the Upanishads and the monastic Vedants, Buddhist as well as Sufi mysticism, are outstanding examples, all profoundly reflective and speculative in their character. But in no sense can such mysticisms be considered impersonal. For in each case the self finds or identifies itself with a Larger Self, the Absolute, the Supreme Reality, the Whole; and in this discovery or identification the self, indeed, attains its profoundest depths, and personality reaches its supreme realization. The mystic does not lose himself in the abyss of nonentity; on the other hand, he attains the depth and summit of his being, discovers his True Being or Essence in its perfection; in brief, he transcends all the limitations of anthropomorphism, all human percepts or scales of values. According to Santayana, intuitions are placed and dated in the natural world by their occasions and their organs; an actual intuition of pure Being—something absolutely infinite—is evidently irrelevant to any place or time, and disproportionate to any natural organ. We may safely say, therefore, that it cannot exist. Yet, if we transfer our point of view to that of the spirit itself and coexist with and by it, we shall see that intellectually and morally the spirit is fulfilled by the being of its object, not by its own existence. There lies the solemn nature of intellect, that existence is indifferent and imperceptible to it; so that in losing its existence—if it has died victorious—it has lost what was no

part of its prize, and in attaining the prize it has saved itself entire.¹

MYSTICISM'S LAST SECRET—EASTERN AND WESTERN MYSTICISMS.—It is the attempt to reach a conception of Pure Being which is wholly free from the restrictions attaching to anthropomorphic conceptions that is responsible for the distinction between God as unconditioned and God as conditioned. The contemplation of God as Unconditioned or Pure Being is the last secret of a mystic life. Here religious emotions or moral feelings drop into their very small, very human, places, and religion is transformed into a purely intellectual and spiritual discipline. Such transformation is true of all higher mysticism, rooted as it is in experience; and it is this which forms the basis of the conception of God as True in all higher religions. God as True alone can lead up to the attainment of the perfect intuition and the sure, final insight. According to the Bhagavad-Gita, "Men of no understanding deem me who am unperceived to have become perceptible, knowing not my absolute, changeless, and supreme essence." When man realizes the Whole and the Unconditioned he becomes himself the Immortal Whole, and there is neither limitation nor separateness for him; "The whole is that, the Whole is this, from the Whole is derived the Whole and the Whole remains behind." "Thou art That (the Universal)," *Tat tvam asi*, is the celebrated dictum of the seer of the *Upanishads*. The angle of spiritual vision of the Zen masters is somewhat different. When a Zen master obtains spiritual illumination he finds the universal in the concrete, and experience and knowledge, life and logic become identical. One particular object holds within itself all other particular objects merged, instead of all particular objects being absorbed in the Great Universal, as in Hindu mysticism. Thus in the Zen intuition in the world it so happens that when you lift a bunch of flowers, or point at a piece of stone, the whole world in its realitativeness is seen reflected here. One particle of dust is raised and the great earth has it; one flower blooms and the universe rises with it.² The individual now announces: "I am the Brahman," "I am in the Father," "I am the World Mother," "I am the Heart

¹ Hartmann, *The Foundations of Mysticism*, p. 42.

² See Suzuki, *Ways of Zen Buddhism*, First series, pp. 28, 262.

of Wisdom," "I am His Love." The great Sufi Al-Hujwari quotes Sahl ben Abdullah, who says :—

"Unification is this, that you should recognise that the essence of God is endowed with knowledge, that it is not comprehensible nor visible to the eye in this world, but that it exists in the reality of faith, infinite, incomprehensible, non-incarnate; and that He will be seen in the next world, outwardly and inwardly in His kingdom and His power, and that mankind are veiled from knowledge of the ultimate nature of his Essence; and that their hearts know Him but their intellects cannot grasp unto Him; and that believers shall behold Him with their (spiritual) eyes without comprehending His infinity."

In the light of this the distinction between Father and Son, between Brahman and subjective self, between Creative Energy and its particular manifestation, between the Infinite Lover and the finite Beloved, becomes a materialistic framework, since mystic revelation recognises no such distinction. On the other hand, philosophical schools have developed on the basis of a discussion of the mutual relationship of the three ultimates and their connection with the world as a whole. Seal, after a comparative analysis of Christian and Hindu Trinities, observes that both the Brahman and Vaisnava Trinity (the latter even though admitting manifestation) are Monarchian or Sabellian in principle; and that the Christian controversies as to the sameness, similarity, or difference of essence in the Trinity, have no place in the Indian systems. But these very distinctions, and others yet subtler, still reappear in the discussion of the individual relation to the Universal soul. The history of all religions is full of doctrinal differentiation and controversy, and Hinduism, Buddhism, and Christianity have all been divided into contending schools or sects on account of an emphasis of one ■ the different aspects of the same Reality. Such differentiation is, of course, rooted in man's preference for the way of knowledge, or the way of love and action, which appeal differently to different people. In the Eastern religions the way of introspection appeals to a large number of individuals, while in the West the majority take to the way of love and action. Thus, on the whole, there is less passivity and more initiative in the Western mystical consciousness. The danger of Western mysticism is that the real and intimate personal communion with God may not rise above

the merely worldly and gregarious level, and the sense of totality, of finality, may be weak. The danger of Oriental mysticism is that in the emphasis of introspection the personality may be swallowed up in a vast emptiness, where all marks of individuality vanish, leaving only the blankness of the unconscious. True mysticism is an attempt to rise above all relativities, and to reach the supreme expression of personality. When the Eastern mystic comes in contact with a larger-than-self, he is called the Absolute, the One, the Whole, or the Universal Reason or Life which permeates everything and everybody, the self expands instead of shrinking, and individuality is freed from all limitations. On the other hand, where there is a hypnotic absorption in mere emptiness, the desire to escape all relativities overshoots its mark and mysticism degenerates into a barren impersonalism. For this excess Eastern mysticism itself supplies a corrective, and gives a warning. We read in the *Sermons of the Sixth Patriarch*, one of the most important works in the history of Zen Buddhism:—

"The very source of our being is from the first devoid of determination, and there is nothing particular which could be taken hold of (as an object of sense). When I speak of the absolute emptiness of our essence, it should be understood in this sense: O my good and intelligent brethren, take heed, however, not to cling to emptiness when I speak thus. This is most important, not to cling to emptiness (or nihilism). For those who sit quietly absorbed in the contemplation of the absolute (that is empty) are sinking into blank nothingness."

RELIGION OF MAN-GOD.—In true mysticism the essence of Self embraces all things and all beings. Hence the mystic's identification with Life and the Universe is essentially bound up with his personality. His recognition reflects truly the creative power which resides within himself, which is the living cause of all appearance. The mystic thus is the ideal pragmatist, as Keyserling says. For him the difference between truth and error does not exist. He lives in the domain of pure, living significance, which can manifest itself as well in error as in truth.² Nothing in the world then is shunned, and nothing can defile. In the true mystical consciousness

¹ Suzuki, "The Zen Root of Buddhism," *Journal of the Far East Society*, 1900-7.

² Keyserling, *The Eternal Duty of a Philosopher*, vol. 1, p. 281.

the life of the world and the sense always attains a profound meaning and significance as the spiritual expression of the Divine. In the Mahayāna meditation the Pure Land of Amida or Paradise is the ultimate and absolute reality, and that is everywhere, so that we may be identified with it right here and now. Similarly in the Vāṇarāya meditation, Brindaban, the Land of Flowing Milk and Honey, is eternal and everywhere. In the eternal Sport of Love (the Rāsa-Līlā) God is in each magical, momentary moment, indissolubly joined to man—Himself a link, a chain, and one great simultaneous Love. Paradise is upon the earth, and it is only because of man's self-thinking and self-willing that he does not see and feel God. The true mystic who lives in such Paradise refuses to leave his fellow-men to suffer in ignorance. He suffers, endures, and hopes like the masses of the work-a-day world. Herein lies the profound truth of Christianity and of the doctrines of incarnation in Hinduism and Bodhisattva in Buddhism which make God live, suffer, and hope with men. The finite is the infinite and vice versa. But it is the intellect which leads us to conceive them separately, this is also the familiar Zen truth. Says Yengo, "Get yourself out of all the entangling relations and rip them up into pieces, but do not lose track of your inner treasure; for it is through this that the high and the low universally responding and the advanced and backward making no distinction, each manifests itself in full perfection."

A somewhat similar thought is that of Von Hugel. "All we do," says the Baron, "has a double-relatedness." "■ is a link or links of a chain that stretches back to our birth and on to our death. It is a part of a long train of cause and effect, of effect and cause, but there is also, all the time, another, a far deeper, a most inspiring relation. Here you have no slow succession, but you have each single act, each single moment joined directly to God—Himself not a chain, but one great simultaneity." In Bengal the mystics of the Easy and Direct Path disregard theology and metaphysics, and seek the Supreme Man not through ineffable depths alone but, as Hocking would say, in the world through the foregrounds of common experience. The human self here seeks unity in the mental world in the Other Man, who gives

* D. T. Suzuki, *Essays on Zen Buddhism*.

objectivity to all knowledge, even to the knowledge of fellow-men and spans past and future. How exquisitely has this been expressed in a Bengalee folk-song said to be composed by a village mystic belonging to the untouchable class! One of them sings: "Realize how finite and unbounded are One as you breathe in and out. Of all ages you will count the moments, in every moment find the eternity. The drop in the ocean, the ocean in the drop. If your endeavour be but natural, beyond argument and cogitation, you will taste the precious quintessence. Blinded are you by over-much journeying from bourns to bourns. O Gangaram be simple! Then alone will vanish all your doubts."

Mysticism exalts the common life of man to dignity equalling that of gods. "Know ye not that ye are a temple of God and that the spirit of God dwelleth in you?" Says Rajjab, a mystic of medieval India:—

"God-man (sarr-~~...~~) is thy definition. It is not a delusion but truth. In ~~...~~ the first, the perfect knowledge seeks love and when the form and the formless (the individual and the universal) are united love is fulfilled in devotion."

It is only through a God-inspired conviction of the worth of man that society can be saved from the perils of exploitation and mechanical standardization.

"The common man is God who shares the common lot with man, labours and sweats for his bread, he shares the soil with his plough and sows and grows his crops that wave in the golden sun. He reaps and gathers grain by grain, does all but eat for himself!"

A Bengalee folk-song reiterates this:—

"He is within us, unshakable Reality. We know him when we unlock our own self and meet in a true love with all others."

The religious recognition of persons as finalities of thought and action alone can eradicate falsehood and injustice in human and social relations, while it will furnish the basis of free and spontaneous groups and associations as opposed to the institutionalism and standardization of to-day which subserve instrumental as opposed to final or purposive efficiency. There is to-day a separation between intrinsic or final and instrumental or economic ends which is corroding

¹ From an *Srinan*, *Rama Singh's Sisters of the Spinning Wheel*.

² Quoted in Tagore, *The Religion of Man*, p. 112.

social life. Mysticism imports final or spiritual values into the common daily life and relations of men. Where every man seeks the final good, social consciousness itself is brightened and deepened by the constant presence of the final good in each and every individual. It is, therefore, the latter which inspires the meaning of group life. On the other hand, no group life or behaviour will create the same community of feelings and ideas which are not keyed up to the final good. Hence the love of God, and the love of one's neighbour, or the diverse sentiments in groups and associations, are all bottomed the same aspiration towards the unity and harmony of life. It is society where the individual realises in sentiment and action his unity with and experience of the Divine. Thus every social endeavour, every fine and delicate adjustment to the social order, every group sentiment, is a dynamic apprehension of God, Who, like Society, is neither exhausted within us nor lives without us. Every advance in man's conquest of nature or apprehension of human value is similarly a fresh realisation of the oneness and beauty of God, caught away from time and space and science and knowledge no other than the intellectual framework in which man perceives God's multiplicity and divineness in the realms of Nature and Humanity.

CHAPTER XIX

MODERN THOUGHT AND EASTERN MYSTICISM

RELIGION AND MODERN SCIENCE.—Mysticism is the art of finding a harmonious relationship to the whole of reality which man envisages. Humanly speaking, man seeks to find peace with self and his universe. Mystical intuition establishes a perfect harmony of being and certainty of the universe. It deepens man's sense of order in the self and expands it into the universe. Thus even in intense action a calm aloofness becomes possible. Mysticism combines a strenuous moral life with a profound peace of mind and a delicate sense of beauty or order. An intellectual detachment and esthetic refinement thus become expressions of the poise and balance which the self derives from the heart of the universe. The gulf between man's intrinsic and instrumental ends disappears, and neither the ordinary routine of individual life nor social effort exhibit any longer contradictory motives facing each other in segregated worlds of experience. These are resolved into a harmony that is but the projection of spiritual illumination into the world of human relationships and values.

Mysticism deliberately bases Reality on value, and makes God enter into natural and social experience. Thus mysticism involves a dual movement, first, the development of personality by the integration of the faculties of life and the forces of the universe into a unitary whole, and, second, the descent of these faculties of life into the expansive valleys of human values and practice. In true religious experimentation such as that of the mystic the two processes are recurrent, forming phases of a profound unity and harmony of experience. The course of the mystic's life, indeed, falls into a normal alternation between what Hocking calls a "world-flight", in which, by way of his negations, the mystic reaches the absolute real and good and an activism in which he seeks these in human and social intercourse. Among some mystics,

at any rate, such alternation of light and flight, action and communion, is the rhythm of the very breath of life, the ebb and flow of their normal consciousness. Mysticism reconciles the opposition between idealism and pragmatism, between transcendentalism and naturalism, and makes the sense of the unity of all things as realized in the self the basis of all vision and effort. The mystic denies the biological boundaries which separate thing from thing, person from person, subject from self, the outer world from the inner reality.

MATTER, LIFE, AND MIND, A UNITARY WHOLE.—Modern science and philosophy are gradually setting themselves free from the pernicious habit of seeing an antithesis between things which can be conceived as distinct. The mechanical idea is fading from the realm of science as physics and chemistry come nearer to biology, and a similarity between plant and animal life is established by demonstrating the unity of physiological mechanism in all life. According to J. S. Haldane, "the fundamentally different conceptions which seemed to separate biology and physics are being found unnecessary." Jagadis Chunder Bose, who is responsible for breaking down many conventional barriers in the sciences, finds that the throb of life, the pulse of growth, the impulse coursing through the nerve and its resulting sensation, thought, and emotion—all these are a continuation infinitely evolved, of the thrill in matter. To quote Bose :—

"How strange it is that the transfer of excitation in matter should not merely be transmitted, but transmuted and reflected like the winge on a mirror, from a different plane of life, in sensation and in affection, in thought and in emotion. Which of them is undecaying, and which is beyond the reach of death?"

Experimental work in the borderlands between biology and chemistry, between matter and mind is now showing that many traditional barriers are illusory. This issue has important religious implications. Says an anonymous writer :—

"There is a new marked tendency visible of critical thought to-day to ignore phantom barriers and to investigate experimentally whether the Oriental conception of multiple unity is not a more demonstrably true apprehension of reality than the aspects under which Western thought hitherto has envisaged it—characterized by the antitheses and antagonisms arising out of a compartmentalized view of the universe in which mind is opposed to matter,

and the knowledge of the physical properties of matter and the laws regulating it is concerned on something other in kind from the properties of life and its laws, or the mind and its laws, or the 'soul' of man and its laws."

And he asks :—

"May there not be an underlying unity of bio-physio-psychological laws with the laws governing the sensation of human being to society (the human environment), and of society to the larger environment of the universe ?" ¹

If there be the march of one law in the realms of matter, life, and mind, how many decades will pass before man discovers the secret processes of this all-controlling mind or life or vitality, which, though apparently distinct from material substance, interacts closely with matter thereby manifesting itself and achieving its purposes ?

"It is plain to every one," writes Sir Oliver Lodge, "that matter does not exhaust even the physical universe. The ether, or whatever is equivalent to it, must be taken into account, though this and all ultra-material things—such as beauty, intelligence, sensation, faith, hope, love are only known to us in their association with matter. We have discovered, for example, that light is an ethereal vibration, but what we see is not the light itself, but the material objects on which it falls."

How strangely do these words correspond to the analysis given in one of the Mahayana Sūtras :—

"Sight and the associations of sight (visual phenomena) and all the attributes of thought are but as an empty flower of space—an *akāśa*. In their real character they are unsubstantial."

If the ether is constituted as Sir Oliver Lodge believes it is, it must be the seat of enormous energy, not necessarily infinite, but far beyond any energy of which we have any conception. All the energies that we experience in matter are but a minute and residual fraction of the ethereal energy of which they are a feeble manifestation. Sir Oliver Lodge speculates that this boundless ether, with its boundless content of energy, is stirred and is impregnated throughout with something that may be called life and mind *in excelsis* : that it is the home of the ideal and the eternal, and that all life and mind we are conscious of is but an infinitesimal fraction of the stupendous reality. He conceives of ether as the vehicle or physical instrument of this supreme mind. It may be that "spirit" is a better term, that spirit permeates

¹ Collier, *The Dance of Sun, To-day and To-morrow* Series.

and infuses everything, and that it controls, sustains, and has brought into being the visible and tangible frame of things. The conviction has gradually shaped that physical ether is literally and physically quivering or pulsating with life and mind. It is as if we might regard it as a great reservoir of life, from which separate individual supplies can be drawn from time to time, as from a store of raw material in a warehouse. There is very little difference between this conception and the ancient and essential religious conviction of the East. The sixth patriarch of Zen Buddhism expresses it, for instance, in almost identical terms.

"O my good and intelligent brethren, the ether as we see it about us, embraces all material forms, such as the sun, moon, stars, and constellations, mountains, rivers, and the great earth, the bubbling springs and the meandering rivulets, grasses, trees, woods and thickets, good even as well as bad, heaven as well as hell, and all the great oceans and all the mountains of Sumeru. Do they not all exist in ether? When I speak of the emptiness of one's mind, let it be understood in the above way. O my good and intelligent brethren, the self-emerge embraces all things, and on that account it is called "great." All things exist in the measure of every sentient being. When you see good and evil existing in this world do not cling to them, nor shun them, nor be defiled by them. The mind is like unto ether, and it is called Great."

ULTIMATE PROBLEMS IN EASTERN AND WESTERN THOUGHT.—The difference between the modern scientific and Eastern religious conviction is this, that in the East the ground or essence of life, mind, and matter is not neutral, as in the West, but is impregnated with eternal values. Here it is the original Life and Mind itself, the medium for the intercourse of the mind with itself and with the universe. The Hindu mystical consciousness also conceived this unity which underlies matter, life, and mind, and the message proclaimed centuries ago was clear and outspoken. "They who see but one in all the changing manifoldness of the universe, unto them belongs Eternal Truth—unto none else, unto none else!" We also read in the *Upaniads* :—

"The Supreme Brahman, the Supreme Self, is pervading in this broad world. He is subtler than the subtle, larger than the large. He is eternal."

According to the *Brahmanda Purana* :—

"Inside the earthen jar is ether. When the jar is broken the separate entity of ether in the jar no longer exists. The soul is like the jar. Its individuality having disappeared the common property

of consciousness survives. The individual self, like the earthen jar, has many forms. Being broken again and again, it does not know the nature of breaking. But the Great Self understands what the nature of the breaking is."

Similarly in the *Upanishads*, the Supreme Self is described as follows :—

"That which fills the space everywhere, high, middle, or low, is the Supreme Self, and he who can master his mind free like ether by detaching it from all desires, knows the Supreme Self and has obtained freedom."

In the *Mahāvishvavidya Tantra* we read :—

"Just as ether exists within, inside and outside all things, so does the Supreme Self pervade the whole universe, present everywhere and sustaining every form. When the pot is broken the ether within it ceases to be contained of ether, when the body perceives the Self similarly becomes one with the Whole, and the Indivisible."

Here we have the modern scientific speculation, but it is accepted more widely and fully than in the West. The ether about which modern science knows so little may have an intricate life of its own. What are the conditions and forms of ethereal life? Is matter and, hence, is mind merely aggregations or motions of the ether? What is the relation between form and colour and hence man's material body and the super-mind which appears to be ether itself? Or is the ether a vehicle of the super-mind itself? We cannot answer these queries. The ether and its relation to mind and matter are enigmas yet unsolved. The "laws" of the working of ether may eventually lead to the explanation of many phenomena of the mystical life.

EXPLANATIONS OF PARANORMAL PHENOMENA—Possibly the facts brought to light under the heading **III** psychical phenomena may be explained eventually by the laws of ether to which we at present have no key. Thus telepathy, clairvoyance, materialisation, or premortem may be understood as phenomena of ethereal life. The problems of personality and survival may be set at rest as we understand more about the great stream of existence which penetrates all things in the spatio-temporal order and passes beyond it to the infinitudes.

"Modern vitalism has opened the door to the problem of immortality," observes Uexküll, "it teaches us that organism does not owe its empirical existence in the realm of matter to forces

working in space, i.e., to focus toward its matter and starting from matter, but that it is formed by agents coming from outside space and working into it. May it be said as an analogy that these agents come also from outside time and that their action means the transfiguration of a part of Reality from a non-temporal into a temporal plane of existence? Then death might be the reverse or the going back of the emperor of the individual into the sphere from which it has come: the Transcendental existence, which is yet not nothing."

In the realm of the mind, there is the so-called dissociation of personality studied by many French investigators and by Merton and Walter Prance: one soul, but several Egos with different "characters" and different contents of memory, at least so far as the particulars are concerned, and finally there is but one Ego agent. Here the Ego-part of the one soul may exist in the one-form and in the many-form alternately. Then there are Professor Driesch's embryological experiments: separate the first two or four cleavage cells of the egg, and you get two or four individuals which are complete. Thus entelechy and soul seem to be one at the very bottom and seem only to manifest themselves as "many" according to the material conditions they find. All these facts, Driesch concludes, may allow us to say that at the very bottom of all life there is one suprapersonal soul-entelechy which becomes "many" only according to conditions.¹

THE UNIVERSE, A GRAND SYMPOSIUM.—One of the fundamental doctrines of modern biological and philosophical speculation is the idea of creative or emergent evolution. Nature shows different grades or levels of existence growing out of each other. Among the series of emergent qualities, mind which has emerged from life that itself has emerged from matter is not the highest quality of existence, unless we assume that the cosmic process is interrupted. The highest quality that man may apprehend is a Cosmic Reality or Deity towards which all phases of existence strive and which encompasses them in its own body. The conception that the world is a hierarchy of existence, which modern science has given, easily leads up to Eastern mysticism, which fuses all levels, distinctions, and relations in the Absolute, the pure and passionless Being which transcends the restless toil of the cosmic life.

A similar significant philosophical tendency is the concept

¹ Hans Driesch, *The Possibility of Metempsychosis*, pp. 86-8.

of Holism. The whole is something more than the mere sum of its parts. The world grows and evolves as a whole, bringing about a harmony of the lesser and simpler with the greater and more complex wholes of nature. The world thus records a gradual development and stratification of progressive series of wholes, stretching from the organic beginnings to the highest levels of spiritual creation. In Smuts's conception :—

"The creative extended field of nature, consisting of all physical, organic, and personal wholes in their close interactions and mutual influences, is itself of an organic or holistic character—that field is the source of the grand Ecology of the Universe. It is the environmental, the society—vital, broadly, adaptive, creature of all wholes and all souls."

The trend of evolution, which sociology also envisages, is for the pattern of life to attain greater and greater solidarity and permanence through friendly, intimate, and subtle linkages. What is organic in nature and shapes her ends blindly and haphazardly becomes purposeful in human society, and thus the pattern of life, spiritual and teleologically progressive, crosses the boundaries of time and space. Bio-ecologic co-operation or, to use another term, symbiosis, organic and social, is the key to the permanence of man's civilization, his works and experiences on the earth. May not this be a faint glimpse of that majestic symbiosis of the Universe brought about by the harmony of the varied forces of nature, of gravitation, light, time, the unseen rays, or the sidereal influences, which has woven for man's vision through the ages the synoptic conception of Absolute Truth, Beauty, and Goodness ?¹

EUROPEAN MOVEMENT TOWARDS A PSYCHICAL MOVEMENT — From another direction the discovery of Einstein that space, time, and matter are shadows of the fifth dimension envisages a new metaphysical base and understanding far different from the present positivism ; and perhaps Vedantic, Mahayāna, or Kantian idealism, neo-Hegelianism, or Bergsonian activism or vitalism will become the basic metaphysical working hypothesis of science and practical life in the future.² The relativity doctrine and its results indicate that space-time becomes like the old ether a substratum or matrix from which

¹ Radhakamal Mukerjee, "The Ecological Outlook in Sociology," *American Journal of Sociology*, November, 1922.

² For an anticipation see J. B. Haldane's *Universe*, pp. 12-17.

all physical differentiations take place. In modern physics the all-pervading ether has been taken from us save as an abstraction. It has been reduced to the mere metrical space-time frame-of-reference in which we locate or measure phenomena or events. As the Rev. T. E. W. Phillips observes :

"The hard solid atoms of Democritus and Dalton have dissolved into electric charges which would appear to be little or nothing more than certain configurations or warpings in the space-time continuum. Our standards of length, duration, and mass hitherto assumed to be absolute and invariable, turn out to be dependent on relative motion, while even force has disappeared save as a manifestation of certain static metrical properties of space-time."

But when the new physics describes the ultimate units, particularly the electron and the quantum, we meet with phenomena in flagrant contradiction with the idea of space-time, as if, for the electron and quantum, space and time really do not exist. Thus Smuts finds a dual character in such ultimate physical units: they behave as wholes, are indeterminate in their behaviour and have an almost metaphysical aspect. The law of chance rather than the ordinary causal law applies to them. This suggests that the ultimate units are not purely physical or material. The quantum doctrine, according to him, points to an undifferentiated primitive world matrix, which includes both the physical and thought characters of the world.

"When from these atoms we start our process of world building, we find at first what is apparently merely a physical universe. But gradually the suppressed vital and mental elements inherent in the universe from the start begin to emerge. Cosmic evolution is thus found to include organic evolution, and this again gives rise to the evolution of spirit, of social and spiritual values, which form our own human phase of the cosmic process."

Modern European thought and its divisions for the interpretation of the picture of the Universe have been revolutionized within a single generation. Formerly it was held that mechanistic determination was established for the inorganic realm, and that if there was no radical difference between the mental and physical processes the mental must be conceived after the pattern of the physical. In recent years the conviction has gained ground that any part of the real

² J. C. Smuts, "Contribution to a British Association Discussion on the Evolution of the Universe," *Nature*, South Circular, 1921.

world may be abstracted from the rest for study, but that each such system is a part of a larger whole in which mental activity has its proper place and, in fact, if a monistic view is urged it is "one in which the physical is assimilated to the nature of psychical, one in which the most elementary of physical processes are conceived after the pattern of her own activities, rather than one in which the terms value, desire, motive, volition, are *mechanical*". The rise of the quantum theory in physics, the organismic theory in philosophy, and the Gestalt or configuration theory in psychology and sociology are interesting indications of a movement towards a psychical monism and away from physical monism.

SOME MODERN METAPHYSICAL QUESTIONS AND THEIR INDIAN ANSWERS.—Standing on the ruins of the older mechanistic view of the universe, Science has confronted the scientific world with the fundamental difficulty which faces every form of philosophical idealism.

"If the nature we study consists so largely of our own mental constructs why do our many minds construct one and the same Nature? Why, finally, do we all see the same sun, moon, and stars?"

Its answer could best be found in that storehouse of Hindu mystic tradition, the *Yoga Vasistha*:—

"The sky, the earth, the air, the ether, the mountains, rivers and space are all parts of mind opened as it were out. The Reality lives within the particle, as within the womb of the mountain, is concealed within the speck, as the comma, dances within the womb of a rock. It rains as clouds and has court in stones and it takes also the form of our minds and thoughts."

When we view ourselves in time and space the pictures of the world that we draw for ourselves are in keeping with the constitution of our internal and external environment, mostly mathematical in form; but when we transcend the barriers of space and time, we become ourselves ingredients of the all-pervading, cosmic Reality. "Knowledge cannot know non-knowledge." The sun, moon, and the stars are of homogeneous nature with knowledge; otherwise they would have remained unknown like objects which do not exist. The new world picture, which is "a parable by which nature is made more comprehensible", is something remarkably

akin to the conviction of Eastern mysticism. The transcendence of mind, which the greater physicists of the West now consider their science indicates, is the established thought-tradition in the East; and the so-called para-physical phenomena, which have become for the last forty years the subject of psychical research in the West and which point directly to the transcendence of mind, have for ages vitally affected the intellectual outlook and the moral life of Easterners.

The universe thus finds its content and significance from the recesses of the human consciousness, to the voice that proclaims the human personality. It is the personality which is now seen to be at once the energetic activity considered in physical science as well as the emotional intensity felt in man's ethical, æsthetic, and religious attitudes. The aim of mystical intuition is the aim at fusing the physical activity in Nature with creative intelligence; to use Whitehead's words, at "piercing the blindness of activity in respect to its transcendent functions".

Distinguished authorities in modern physics and mathematics, indeed, now seem to regard consciousness as fundamental and matter as derivative from consciousness. The events of the physical world they regard as of the same nature as percepts, and since matter is reduced by the relativity theory to a system of events it is consciousness which now becomes the essence of all nature's happenings. "The universe can best be pictured," says Jeans, "although still very imperfectly and inadequately, as consisting of pure thought, the thought of what for want of a wider word you may describe as a mathematical thinker." Similarly Eddington believes that the stuff of the world is mind stuff, but this "mind stuff is something more general than the individual consciousness, although we may think of its nature as not altogether foreign to the feelings of our consciousness. The mind stuff is not spread in space and time; these are part of cyclic scheme ultimately derived out of it." There is no difference between such a picture of the universe and that given in the *Yoga Vāsistha*.

"The universe is pure thought. There is no world apart from thinking. All the three worlds are constructed by the mind by thought alone. As the one pure water of the ocean expresses itself

is the form of *we*, as the *One Reality*, *Consciousness*, *experience* itself in the *shape* of *experiencing world*,"¹

INADEQUACY OF MONOTHEISM WITH ITS PERSONAL DEITY.—A living religion cannot, indeed, but be affected by the recent profound changes in physical science. On the whole the naturalism of some of the Hindu and Buddhist schools of philosophy and religious sects, their recognition of an ultimate substratum and matrix of the universe, and of the validity of intuitive apprehension as a supplementary mode of cognising reality, and their repudiation of miracle or a series of miracles in the cosmic process, fit well with the modern world-view and scientific outlook. Again, the present emphasis of indeterminacy rather than of logic in our dealing with the ultimate constituents or realities of the universe is entirely out of keeping with the doctrine of a Personal God.

No doubt in the course of the next few decades of development of scientific and metaphysical concepts, monotheism with its personal deity will be found incompatible in many minds with religious honesty and inspiration. In the most living Christianity in Europe we find to-day a sense of mystery and a awe and self-abasement before the unsearchable Divine majesty which stands in such sharp relief from the facile anthropomorphism of official Christianity. In Barth, Otto, and Brunner alike we find the emphasis of this new note, which is bound to raise Christianity from the human and gregarious level to which it has nearly lapsed. For many minds dwelling upon "something in nature beyond what is already known in nature" to which science points, the Infinite and the Inscrutable has and will increasingly have its supreme appeal. Thus the more philosophical schools of Hinduism and Buddhism with their cosmic sweep and inclusiveness, their intense sense of the Transcendent and the manifold variety of their doctrines and symbols, offer a sure guidance to the Real and a source of pause amid the bewildering complexities of modern life and experience. The Sankhya conception of ether as the universal substratum, the Vedantic conception of the Atman or universal Self, the Mahayana conception of all beings, living and non-living, as Veritable Buddhas, the Zen resolution of the irreconcilable conflict

¹ Translation by Dr. H. L. Aiyar, *Yoga Sutra and Modern Thought* pp. 19-20.

between the finite and the infinite, are more easily acceptable to the philosophical mind than any theology of fixity, the picture of the earth as the fixed centre of the universe, or of God as the ruler of the earth, and constantly interfering with it, the beliefs of special creation of man and his innate sinfulness or the curse of damnation to those who do not follow the creed. In Japan the Buddhist philosophy of religion has easily blended itself with Husserl's and Meinong's theory of knowledge while the traditional Confucian ethics is assimilated to transcendental idealism such as the Neo-Kantian. Christian and Moslem theology is much more rigid and more linked to the past than Hindu and Buddhist theologies, which have rarely challenged doctrinal freedom and individual religious experimentation.

As an idealistic view of the universe advances further in both Eastern and Western intellectual circles, the need of religious initiative for each individual will be felt all the greater, and thus the Yoga school of Hinduism and the Zen school of Buddhism, simply because of their impersonal and universal appeals, will have more votaries than are at present attracted by them. Religious experimentation no doubt cannot proceed at all without the help of myths, cults, and symbols which have varied in the great historical religions of the world according to race psychology, social and philosophical traditions. Thus even in Yoga and Zen meditation as the experimenter empties the consciousness, his subconscious or apperception mass will be found full of notions derived from the particular school of Hindu or Buddhist school of philosophy, to which he belongs and which he now invests with the joy of his own discovery or orientation. Thus the mystic's ineffable experience bears the impress of myths and symbols, beliefs and norms, in which he is born and bred. As the mystic rises on a higher plane of consciousness he, however, frees himself more and more from the traditional categories and symbols of his particular religion until his metaphysical statement becomes of universal import and acceptance. All this implies that Christianity, Hinduism, and Buddhism should, instead of attacking each other, meditate and cherish the religious experience of the true mystics of each religion. It is even possible to conceive of a mystic, practicing the Hindu Yoga

exercises, accepting the Mahayana philosophical conception of the Buddha nature that is in all sentient existence, loving the meanest flower that blossoms with the ardent love of the Zen monk in the discovery of Nature's beauty as identical with his own spiritual delight, leading a life of aggressive social good will, and service on the inspiration of Jesus's crucifixion and, finally, deriving his poise and serenity from the trials and worries of the work-a-day world in the Upanisadic conception of the pure Atman that is everywhere, in all beings and yet Beyond and Transcendent. Indeed, it is in such manner that the great religions of the world may help one another in the search for truth, goodness, and serenity.

NEED OF ASSIMILATION OF RELIGIOUS WORLD-VIEW WITH MODERN METAPHYSICAL OUTLOOK.—The new concepts of relativity and quantum, vitalism and emergent evolution, can no longer be assimilated by religions which have rigid creeds and conservative theologues bound down to the authorities and formulations of the past. On the other hand, both Hindu and Buddhist higher psychology and philosophy contain elements that give them a distinctively modern significance. This may be helpful in envisaging a vital religious world-view, which may combat successfully the growing tide of materialism. But as long as Hinduism and Buddhism are shut up in their own categories of thought and fail to profit from modern science and metaphysics, it is vain to look towards them for deeper meanings and interpretations. In picturing a new religious world-view the Hindu, the Christian, and the Mahayana mystics must co-operate in an intensification of the *common sense*, so that they may rediscover symbols of the Concrete Universal not in momentary flashes of religious ecstasy and insight but in stable and habitual illumination as a counterpoise to modern naturalism. The mystic's discovery of Reality in this world of many-changing things, his reconciliation of the monistic and pluralistic traditions, of immanence, incarnation, and transcendence, can alone show the way towards the mutual participation and interpenetration of religion, metaphysics, and science. We need an infinite enlargement of the Universe rather than the finite universe as presented by Bertrand Russell or Jeans, which hampers our *common sense*. Modern astronomers and mathematicians say that on account of the operation of the

second law of thermodynamics the ultimate extinction of the universe is beyond doubt. A wasting finite organism can hardly be a moving image of eternity, God being conceived as emerging with the universe in the process of its evolution and may be supposed to end with it. But what if the universe be dying and doomed, for God is beyond the world of time and space, the Good and the Perfect. God, though immanent transcends in the universe and we may conceive the beginning, development, and ending of the latter like any other series of events as taking place in the order of spatio-temporal relations; yet the universe itself stands in its aliogetherness an eternal fact in the Divine and other minds, which share the knowledge of eternity. Eastern mysticism is something more than anthropomorphic systematization. It alone can rescue metaphysics from the crippling effects of the invasion of physical science, and save human souls from the laws governing the motion of electrons and protons or the ceaseless flux of the evolutionary process. The absolute flux, says Santayana, who is a spokesman of the new metaphysics, is wrapped in darkness as it continually passes from one untenable condition to another, and stretches one's attention absurdly over what is not given, over the lost and unattained. "When the flux manages to form an eddy and to maintain by breathing and nutrition what we call a life, it affords some slight foothold and object for thought and becomes in a measure like the ark in the desert, a moving habitation for the eternal." "The absolute flux cannot be physically arrested"; the philosopher contemplates beautifully and with an accurate vagueness, "but what arrests it ideally is the fixing of some point in it from which it can be measured and illumined. Otherwise it could show no form and maintain no preference. The irrational fate that lodges the transcendental self in this or that body, inspires it with definite passions, and subjects it to particular buffets from the outer world—this is the prime condition of all observation and inference, of all failure and success." How strongly does Bergson's and Santayana's universe resemble that envisaged by Arvagoshā and how perilously does it approximate to the mechanical naturalism of modern science if it be stripped of the spiritual interpretations which Buddhism, like the new metaphysics, has almost always given to Reality and cosmic forces extending

along endless spheres of worlds (lokas) and endless eons of ages! (kala of kalpas.) The Cosmos or the Eternal Spirit is the Reality. To man's thinking self, it is the ultimate object of knowledge. With our limitation of the senses and imagination we can conceive Reality, however, only as space-time or ether, which contains the whole of the energy of the universe and the properties of matter, whether inanimate or animate, the latter being an index of the remarkable properties of space near it under different conditions described by modern science as gravitational, electric, magnetic, or biological fields. The laws which subsist in the mind of the Eternal Spirit are comprehended by human reason as the symmetry or order of the universe. Man's impulses and desires discover these as Beauty, Charity, and Goodness. But the Eternal Spirit, like the many-dimension space and the absolute flux, defies man's apprehension, though these may be arrested ideally at some point from which they can illumine man's senses. When man looks on the universe from his clarified intelligence he sees it as Existence. When he sees it as a sentient being he sees it as Life and finds even the clods of earth or the unseen worlds of infinite space and time as Becoming. When he looks on it as a psycho-social being he sees it as the substance of absolute or eternal values, Truth, Goodness, and Beauty, which enter into the core of all human experience and guide man's social destiny. When he looks on and on without a relaxation of his understanding, he sees it as the Mystery till then unknown. Thus matter, life, and mind, like light, heat, colour, and sound, are his mental infernesses. The Eternal Spirit is outside and yet extends over time and space, and the cosmos. Man lives to see It in Relation, then It is of bewildering variety which subsists, however, in an Eternal Unity that comprehends both the immensity of time and space and the values of human experience. In the mind of the Eternal Spirit there is a Grand Symbiosis of the Cosmos in which every part, however insignificant, knows what other detail parts are doing and acts accordingly. There is also an abiding human symbiosis in the Spirit behind our direct apprehension, which leads us to truth and righteousness and exalting love, faith, and sacrifice. The absolute flux, because of its evanescence, is a help and not a hindrance in man's worship, as says an Indian mystic,

Dadu. While returning back to its Origin, the flux captures our mind and takes it along with itself. The call of Beauty tells us of the Unthinkable, towards whom it lies. In passing over us Death assures us of the truth of Life. In some such manner a modern religious world-view will have to assimilate to itself our changed scientific and metaphysical outlook.

MORALITY, AN AGREEMENT WITH THE UNIVERSE.—A similar change is expected in the field of the theories of morality. Reason, it is understood, can explain morality but cannot create the moral sanction. Man is above all relativities, and no social or worldly code of conduct is acceptable to the spirit because that spirit is in its essence non-relational, non-social, non-practical, non-moral. Morality in the East is nothing but conformity to the law of the universe. When man comprehends and follows the Path of Nature, human and social relations are transmuted. Life, personality, and God, have in modern European thought emerged from materiality. In the highest level of existence man identifies himself and the universe with God as Personality of personalities; and in so far as he deliberately pursues the active ideal of truth, charity, and beauty he is in communion with the Reality and participates in the creative manifestation of the spirit. When the personality of God is seen within, all around, and beyond, man achieves a sense of fellowship with man, beasts, and everything past, present, and future. In the unity of consciousness there is no difference between self and fellow-beings and the larger environment of the universe. That has been also the ideal of Indian ethics as expounded, for instance, in the *Shagazed Gita*, which enunciates that the wise man must in all his living intercourse in the world meditate on all creatures as one with the self, or more fully in the two-fold form, see himself in every creature and see every creature as himself. How naively do the Zen masters express the same thing in the following dialogue: A monk asks Dazhi: "What is my Self?" "That is my Self," answers the master. "How is it that my Self is your Self?" The ultimate dictum was "That is your Self." Without this last remark, comments Suzuki, the whole affair may resolve into a form of pantheistic philosophy. It is interesting to mention that a modern Japanese philosopher Nishida, in his system of ethics, continues

this Eastern traditional thought. Nature, according to Nishitani, is in its ground nothing but morality. Nature not being originally rational, cannot be rationalized. Then between nature and reason there must be a something—say a rational feeling—by means of which a gate of possibility for the realization of morality shall be opened. Such a feeling is, on the one hand, innate, i.e. natural, but possesses, on the other, a supernatural quality and is peculiar to men as rational beings. "Eastern philosophy," observes the Japanese philosopher and critic Taniguchi, "always seeking the ever-creative root of life in the universe, teaches us that the end or goal of human life is to be in agreement with the universe, and recommends to us as the means of attaining this end the negative unworldly virtues in general." Nishitani follows the tradition of Lao Tse. The World in mystical intuition appears as the Body of the Divine, evolution including human history becomes the Divine will or sport, and the Divine righteousness, beauty, and wisdom are realized in the human environment. Man's social life and relations, which exhibit the confused and often distracted generic animal urges, are transmuted into an ardent search for the true or the beautiful, i.e. the essence, which experience would reveal if it were pure and perfect. Thus so much of the eternal, the good, and the beautiful as is then manifested in the transitory, the partial and the imperfect quickens man's hopes and aspirations. A profounder respect for man as man, a greater spiritual courage, a finer æsthetic sensitivity, a deeper sympathy for human suffering, a more fervent goodwill to all existence and all life—a more whole-hearted devotion to the cause of science and knowledge—all these qualities which elevate social life bring man nearer to God. And thus the values of religion, Truth, Beauty, and Goodness, and the values of life, will not be sundered, nay, they will reinforce one another.

The man of God with his freedom from personal predilections, his open-mindedness, and above all his sense of the whole, sees into the life of things. The world when it is too much with us blunts our perception, and thus for material success and scientific achievement alike we need to regain our lost powers and for nature and the world their lost fascination through the mystic's discipline. Hocking observes: "The mystic recovers the power to appreciate

facts of the qualities of things, achieving a new innocence of the senses so that flowers, sounds, colours are felt as if for the first time." With his fine sense-apperception the mystic is often found in the person or in the immediate tradition not only of the man of scientific genius, but also of the poet, who endows the Yarrow with a light that never was on sea and land. The mystic's imagination, freed as it is from all quantitative and relative ideas, enters into heights inaccessible for the ordinary run of mankind who in their concentration on the flux of natural events often lose the inherent value of the world. Above all, the mystic stands for the infinite and intrinsic worth of life. In his profound and persistent absorption with the Real, the mystic easily and unswervingly distinguishes between truth and falsehood and his inner certainty endows him with a courage, sense of honour and determination that can rise superior to any bafflement and suffering. Yet though his mind, concentrated on the truth, is as "unyielding as the thunderbolt", his heart is as "tender as the flower-bud". That the mystic has often been an ethical pioneer, a religious reformer, an innovator in every sense of the word, is due not only to his direct apprehension of the Real, his emancipation from the blandishments of sense, and the affirmments of social recognition but also to his strong sense of human brotherhood. The mystic believes in nothing short of the intrinsic and unchanging goodness and beauty of fellow-men.

The life of the man of God is the science of growing love and faith in the life of man, his the art of the gardener that plants beauty in every social relation. In vice, ugliness, or misfortune, in the defeat of social purpose, contemplation re-establishes an intrinsic harmony between the individual and the society, and joy may be created in despair and suffering or in the imperfect achievement. Life is immortalised and fate loses its terrors when the actual in experience becomes the whole and entire reality for the mind, and peace and liberation are found in all futile events, in all imperfect stages.

THE IDEAL OF GOD-MAN IN MAHAYĀNA BUDDHISM.—The identity of the mortal and the immortal, the human and the divine has received the noblest mystical expression in Mahayāna Buddhism. Here God is conceived as plunging

Himself into the ever-rushing current of world life and sacrificing Himself to save His fellow creatures from being eternally lost in it. He has willed that all sentient creatures should be made altogether free, and He does not forsake them until there is all-freedom. The Mahayāna strongly emphasizes the conception of vicarious suffering and the transference of merit, and, in fact, so deeply has the Mahayāna taken to heart this ideal of self-forgetting service that it would be difficult to find in the whole world's religious literature more radical and unceasing expressions of it.² It is the faith of the Mahayāna that in the endless past innumerable Buddhas had dedicated themselves to the task of obtaining salvation for all suffering creatures, and that there is an endless line of future Buddhas, i.e. Bodhisattvas in the infinite future who have joined the Invisible Band. Endowed with intelligence (*prajna*) we are all Bodhisattvas now, if not in actuality, potentially. The Hinayana was meant for the monk and the recluse, "who wanders alone like a rhinoceros." The Mahayāna established the ideal of the Buddha in the heart of the work-a-day world, preaching the ideal of the pious and efficient layman, always at the service of others, and at the same time providing food for speculation to the most abstract minds. Every layman may imitate the Bodhisattva in his long and arduous course of discipline. He would eradicate his belief in self by the meditation of vacuity and by practicing unbounded compassion and charity among other perimites. Thus he would rise from the mere self to approximate that absolute in which the ideas of self and others are no longer discriminated, with the loss of the distinction of self and object. When he reaches the conception of all things as Buddhas, his life comes to be dedicated to the service of every sentient creature until not one of them remains subject to the round of Samsara. Such is the road of the truth-seeker from the phenomenal to the Real; the land of birth and death is the home of the immortal. One takes to unselfish service realizing the falseness of the phenomenal world, and in such a consecration the Buddha nature in ■ sentient creatures is an aid and inspiration. Nirvana is not to be found in heaven, nor in the pure Western land (*Sukhavasi vyvaha*), wanting in sorrow, abounding with joy, apart from the human world, as conceived by most ■ the

² Furti, *The Footprints of Buddha*, p. 212.

common disciples of the Sākhya-yoga school. *Nirvana* is to be looked for in this world; it would be realised in man's own daily life. If the world be full of misery and unhappiness man's own life or *karman* accounts for these. It is man's mind which is the originating root of misery. Thus man must not neglect his individual and social duties, the due performance of which can only be ensured by strenuous preparation and discipline. Nagarjuna says:—

"The teachings of Buddha are based on the two-fold truths, the conventional and the transcendental, by which man performs his duty and attains *Nirvana*. Those who do not understand the division between the two cannot know the real depth of Buddha's teaching."¹

Mahayāna non-duality thus culminates in the magnificent paradox of the identity of *Nirvana* with the *Samsara*, the non-distinction of the unshown and the shown.

"*Samsara* is in no way to be distinguished from *Nirvana*, and *Nirvana* is in no way to be distinguished from *samsara*. Their spheres are the same. This our worldly life is an activity of *Nirvana* itself, not the slightest distinction exists between them" (Nagarjuna).

This view is also expressed with dramatic force in the aphorism "*Yas kilesas te bodhi, yas samasas tat nirvanam*" (that which is suffering is also Wisdom, the world-order is also *Nirvana*). One and the same is the heart of Suchness and the heart of Birth and Death. The body here becomes identical with the soul, and phenomena and noumena inseparable from each other. Says Asvaghoṣa: "What is immortal and what is mortal are harmoniously blended. For they are not one, nor are they separate."²

THE ONE ROAD TO CONTENTED BUDDHISM.—This identification of the *dharma* with the world (*loka*) is also the distinctive feature of the Tien Tai and the Avatamsaka schools in China, which represent the fully developed Mahayānism and are characterized as the two most beautiful flowers in the garden of Buddhist thought. The Avatamsaka school maintains the oneness and correlativity in all life, and develops with great skill the doctrine of the Many in the One and the One in the Many. Its root idea is the correlation of identity and difference, the "two gates of religion". From the religious

¹ Yashokaṇṇa Sūtra, *Synopsis of Buddhist Thought*, pp. 262-3.

² Kertti, *Buddhist Philosophy*, chapter xvii, *Compassionary, Buddha and The Gospel of Buddhism*, p. 242.

point of view the gate of identity corresponds to *Dharma-kaya* or God, and the gate of difference to the world of individual existence. The identity is described by Yekdahi as follows :—

"The nature of the One is common to that of all things.
In one *dharma* are included all the *dharmas* without exception.
The one moon is reflected universally on all waters.
All the water-moons are included in the one moon.
The *Dharma-kaya* of Tathagata is enveloped in our nature;
Our nature is identical with that of Tathagata."

A special feature of the Tendai Buddhism is the ceremony of initiation into the fundamental oneness of life, the confessions and vows being made to Buddha himself, i.e. to one's innermost soul and entity. The way to the Cosmic Personality is the One Road (*Eke-gata*), as it presupposes the basic unity of Buddha and all other creatures, and emphasizes the possibility, nay, the necessity of the ascent of all to the stature of Buddhahood. The Buddha nature, the Tendai school boldly declares, is inherent even in the most vicious persons and all can rise to the dignity and all-inclusiveness of Buddha himself. Everything in the universe, be it the earth itself, or a form of vegetation, or a fence, a post, or a piece of brick, performs the work of Buddha. Inspired by the spiritual influence of the Buddhas, even inanimate things lead us to the state of enlightenment.¹

"In Body, nothing dual there existed,
Nor is any thought of self present,
The *Dharma-body*, undelimited and non-dual,
In its full splendour manifesteth itself everywhere.
All the Buddhas of the present, past, and future,
Each one of them is an issue of the *Dharma-body*, immaculate and pure.
Responding to the needs of sentient creatures,
They manifest themselves everywhere, assuming corporeality which is beautiful
They never make the pre-arrangement
That they would manifest in such and such forms.
Separated are they from all desire and worry
And free and self-acting are their responses.
They do not negate the phenomenality of *dharmas*,
Nor do they affirm the world of individuals,
But, manifesting themselves in all forms,
They teach and convert all sentient creatures."

¹ Dogmatism: see Yuen-shan Hsueh, *System of Buddhist Thought*, chapter ix, for the fully developed Mahayana conception of *Dharma-kaya* or God and the world of *Laia*.

² *Aspiration for Enlightenment*, chapter, *Outline of Mahayana Buddhism*.

IDENTIFICATION OF SELF AND COSMIC REALITY, THE ESSENCE OF MODERN RELIGIOUS WORLD-VIEW.—The above doctrine of Cosmic Personalism which regards the world as the sphere of religious experimentation is essential to all higher mysticism, and this and this only is the essence of the modern religious world-view. The motive of this religion grows out of a profound sense of personality, touched by the suffering of fellow-creatures, and the mystery of the world-order. Its metaphysical foundations were laid in the Indian Buddhism, especially of the Yogachara School, and later on in the Vedanta, according to which self as lived and known is genuinely identical with the Non-self, so that love flows from the relation of identity in knowledge, and egotism becomes the outcome of ignorance or illusion. In the East several schools of religious mysticism like the Tendai School in China and Bhakta Schools in India, bridged the gulf between realism and transcendentalism, presupposing the basic unity of the Cosmic Personality and all other beings, and its manifestation and interpenetration in numerous forms, qualities, and relations of existence. The realm of existence is conceived as a stage of reciprocal participation of beings and their conditions, or the emphasis is laid on the community of spirits reciprocating in their mutual relation the love of God. No doubt such a metaphysic is more satisfying to the modern conscience than the idea of the separation between finite selves, and the belief in the personal immortality of "the metaphysically isolated individual", which dominates the West. Not only in the Vedanta and Mahayana Buddhism, but also in the Bhakta Schools, the central principle of metaphysics and religion is brought into intimate relation with the actual process. The environment of Truth, Beauty, and Goodness which religion creates comes to be identified with the human environment. The Divine here is not actual as an existent, but as an ideal. He exists, as Professor Alexander would say, only in the striving of the world to realise his destiny, to help, as it were, to the birth. As the Divine He presupposes Mind and all its creations of Truth, Beauty, and Goodness, but the mystic knows that He is not exhausted by them, He is the Symbol, the Beyond. His body, which man's intellect can comprehend, is the whole world of nature, and His environment is the whole world of

human values. In the Mahayana philosophy all beings are endowed with the Buddha nature, our minds are the Buddha-mind and our bodies are the Buddha-body. It is the Cosmic Person whom man seeks as he realises Truth, Beauty, or Charity. Such realisation is the striving of each for all as the Divinity is one and single whole in which all live in inexhaustible communion with one another. Man seeks divinity not by and for himself. Asanga writes: "The tenderness that the sons of the conquerors (i.e. the enlightened) feel for all creatures, their love, their indefatigability—this is the marvel of all the worlds. But no! It is no marvel at all, since other and self are for them identical." The Zen mystic's first vow is "How innumerable sentient beings are, I vow to save them all." Man strives after all-divinity, the divinity of each in all and all in each, eschews other-worldliness and reconstructs the world in fact. Nagarjuna has said: "The transcendental truth cannot be taught without the assistance of the conventional and Nirvana cannot be attained without understanding the transcendental truth." This note is the same as that of one of the earliest mystical expressions in the world's literature, viz. that of the Ishopanishad: "Truth is both finite and infinite at the same time; it moves and yet moves not; it is in the distant, also in the near; it is within all objects and without them."

A sincere and spontaneous type of rural mysticism has arisen from the ever-green fields and expansive waters of Bengal, which, without any metaphysical and philosophical construction, has expressed itself in simple song and music and in a naive effort at the direct apprehension of the Reality as the Super-individual Person—"the Man whom the soul seeks." Its central idea is that the God-soul reflects itself in every finite individual and in all human relationship and communion. The unitive experience here reveals to the mystic a dual movement of the Spirit, of man God-ward and of God man-ward. Thus the mystic sings:—

*Love is my golden touch—it turns down into service.
Earth seeks to become Heaven, man to become God.*

And, again:—

*For the sake of this love heaven longs to become earth and gods
to become man.*

There is hardly any religion in the world which has ardently sought the Divinity directly in Man, the most Real, and discovered Him ever-new in the world of human forms and relationships. That discovery is none else but the eternal search for the Essential Man by man in the Paradise of his heart.

The gulf between the abstractions of contemplation and the concrete world-order is bridged and individual experience tested by objective reality. Science brings about man's adjustment to the world, and science is not individual, but is shared by all. Religion, similarly, brings about an adjustment on the ideal plane by individual experimentation, and this also does not remain an unshared truth. It is in this manner that the value forms, which are a measure of personality, are shared by the community. The social process exhibits a constant process of differentiation of impulses and desires, of revaluation. New groups constantly arise as a result of change in the organisation of interests. Thus man's effort to adaptation is renewed. The evolution of society is a progressive discovery of ideal values, which become wider in range and more varied in contents, and are defined in terms of cosmic reality that has a social character. This is the essence of religion. Sociology, then, in so far as it seeks the reconciliation of man's varied ends and finds in them some trend which man should consciously strive after, implicates religion. Man's mental world is perpetually changing, and he has always to seek adjustment. To-day there is no adjustment, everywhere there is chaos of man's interests and values. There is conflict between individual and individual, between group and group, and the interests and values these represent. The ideal of community life, where each individual lives for all and all for each, is as remote as religion is from the bare materialistic culture. It is the Cosmic Person, Soul, or Spirit, who is the harmony or unity in the world of consciousness. And the mystic incarnates Him in society, and thus converts group or individual disharmony into an adjustment. The social principle is an aspect of the mystical. The mystic rehabilitates the principle of harmony in all things, in the society in which he lives and moves. Social life and relations present to him some aspects of, the absolute and eternal values, Truth, Goodness, and Beauty

the three attributes by which God is revealed to mankind. On the other hand, society as a process represents a greater and greater co-ordination of its parts, a larger extension of the principle of harmony. Thus social development in its fullness unfolds through a long and arduous process the same values which an individual may obtain by mystical insight. The mystic's intuitions of Love, Beauty, and Truth expand with his participation in the social life, and, indeed, the communion of individuals reciprocating in their mutual relations the infinite Love and Charity of the Person of persons is at once the highest spiritual ideal as well as the picture of human environment at its highest. In Cosmic Personalism the imperfect and unhappy human environment becomes the seat of eternal values, and fellow-man is transmutated to God, the ideal *socius* or Self which ensures man's complete satisfaction of his desires and bestows immortality in the earth here and now. Man can love the broken and the forsaken only in a deeper love in Reality as the fount of Love. Man can pursue truth whether in art, science, and philosophy with unremitting toil and heroic sacrifice or in institutional life with no fear of consequences as he apprehends that by truth he can reach and serve the True Reality. As the thin and shallow rivulet of man's life flows into the full ocean of God's activity, every act is done for the sake of fellow-man, and inactivity becomes no leisure but meditation for the happiness of all. Social and human intercourse no longer becomes trivial and unsatisfying, and indeed gains worth as man feels the abiding presence of the Person of persons in human relations. Who unites him with all fellow-creatures in a mutual participation of Infinite Gladness and Goodness. The actual world is reconstructed on the basis of the participation by the entire community of the eternal values of the individual's spiritual life. Thus the realisation of each person in all, and all in each, in the widest and deepest sense of the phrase, becomes the goal of society and religion alike. The mystical justifies the moral and the social, and endows them with a new strength, and a new assurance. For in the search for God as Infinite Love, Goodness, and Charity, man is united with all in inexhaustible sacrifice and synergy. In unison with the Divine Mind man conserves, co-ordinates, and augments values, and his faith in them, as imperishable as the Divine

mind itself, stands in good stead the society in times of sudden change or crisis. Man's social aspiration is but a phase of his love of God ; all his age-long efforts through the evolution of groups and associations to achieve harmony with the environment are phases of his devotion. Man's worship is ever new, ever varied, because the society in which he must apprehend his unity with God ever changes, eluding from him an ardent, ceaseless experimentation. Society, like God, cannot be exhausted in individual experience ; it keeps man always active, participating in a creative power which has no limits. The richer the harmony and the greater the concord that man obtains from the experience of God, the larger the measure of activities society evokes from him in realizing those harmonies and concords in concrete lived experience. In this wise society makes man seek and obtain ever deeper expressions, ever vaster concords : " Rise into another world while remaining here." Between religion and society there is a reciprocity which has no end. The mystic vision eternally sheds its rays upon our life and experience, and the radiation of our love and thought eternally renews with over-growing brightness the vital flame of vision.

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